United Nations S/PV.7533

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7533rd meeting

Tuesday, 13 October 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Rajoy Brey	(Spain)
Members:	Angola	Ms. Delgado
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Ms. Maira
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Baroness Verma
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2015/716)

Letter dated 1 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2015/749)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

Accessible document Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2015/716)

Letter dated 1 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2015/749)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In my capacity as President of the Government of Spain, I should like to pay tribute to all those killed last weekend in Turkey, Chad and Cameroon, as well as to those injured who are still struggling between life and death. My Government has strongly condemned these terrorist attacks, and I wish to extend my condolences to the families and express my solidarity with the people of Turkey, Chad and Cameroon.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of the following countries to participate in this meeting: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; Ms. Julienne Lusenge and Ms. Yanar Mohammed, both of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security; and Ms. Alaa Murabit, of Voice of Libyan Women.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Her Excellency Ms. Mara Marinaki, Principal Adviser for Gender Issues, European External Action Service of the European Union; and Her Excellency Ms. Bineta Diop, Special Envoy of the Chair of the African Union, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following representatives to participate in this meeting: Mr. Alexander Vershbow, Deputy Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Fathalla, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States; His Excellency Mr. Francisco Laínez, Chief of Staff of the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States; and Her Excellency Ms. Miroslava Beham, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/716, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security.

I wish to also draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/749, which contains a letter dated 1 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Spanish presidency of the Security Council for organizing this important meeting.

(*spoke in English*)

Fifteen years ago, resolution 1325 (2000) underscored the pivotal link between gender equality and international peace and security. Since then, the Council has adopted several resolutions on women and peace and security, each of them a call to action for the international community.

I am personally committed to implementing those resolutions. I have highlighted women's leadership in peacebuilding as a priority. I have appointed five women who are now serving as my Special Representatives in peacekeeping missions from Haiti to Côte d'Ivoire, from the Western Sahara and South Sudan to Cyprus. I have also appointed the first-ever female Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund, in Cyprus.

But all of us must do much more. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) emphasizes the centrality of gender equality and the need to step up our efforts for women's empowerment to achieve Planet 50-50. Our strategies for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) must be aligned with the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), I suggested that the Council convene a ministerial-level review every five years to assess progress, renew commitments and address obstacles. I thank Member States for having come forward today to share their achievements. I look forward to hearing their plans for even stronger action.

This year we have conducted three major reviews of United Nations peace operations, our peacebuilding architecture, and women and peace and security. One common theme has emerged: any reforms must include gender equality and women's leadership as central ingredients and must be strongly grounded in human rights.

We must also pay particular attention to those women who are most vulnerable. Facing a compound disadvantage of gender and ethnicity, indigenous women suffer from multiple forms of discrimination, especially in times of conflict. We must also do much more to combat the growing spread of violent extremism. Groups such as Daesh and Boko Haram have mercilessly targeted women and girls. For example, the systematic acts carried out by Daesh against the Yazidi community, which include killings, torture, rape and sexual slavery, may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. We must ensure accountability.

As we look ahead, we have an ambitious agenda. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is restructuring the gender architecture at Headquarters and in field missions, strengthening the partnership with UN-Women and improving the accountability of senior managers.

The Department of Political Affairs has highlighted the need to deploy gender advisers to all special political missions. It is working to bolster the capacity of its gender team at Headquarters and to keep expanding the engagement and participation of women in peacemaking.

The Department of Field Support is implementing strengthened measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse, and to increase the representation of women in peacekeeping, especially at the senior management level. With my appointment of a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, we have seen strategic leadership and unprecedented advances on this critical aspect of the women and peace and security agenda. We must ensure that these gains are reinforced, particularly the concerted focus on prevention, accountability and the critical needs of survivors of sexual violence.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will ensure that the outcomes and commitments of the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in Istanbul in May, have a strong focus on gender equality. We will also boost efforts to ensure that women and girls affected by crises are systematically prioritized in the planning and implementation of humanitarian responses.

I personally commit to do all I can to ensure that we reach the target of devoting 15 per cent of peacebuilding funds to projects that address gender equality and the empowerment of women. We must also expand this target to our efforts in emerging areas of peace and security threats, in particular the countering of violent extremism. The Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) will present these and other commitments as part of the highlights of my annual report on women and peace and security.

In preparation for this high-level review, I commissioned an independent expert's assessment. The global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is an important part of the United Nations agenda for change. I thank the lead author, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, the high-level advisory group, UN-Women and other United Nations entities, Member States and civil society for their important contributions.

At a time when armed extremist groups place the subordination of women at the top of their agenda, we must place women's leadership and the protection of women's rights at the top of ours. In the face of daunting challenges, I am encouraged and inspired by the recent commitments of everyone from world leaders to grass-roots activists. I expect a similar level of determination and ambition from the long list of Member States that have requested to participate in this open debate today.

Let us heed the call for action and work together to empower women and girls, protect their human rights and advance world peace for everyone — all cornerstones of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a life of security and dignity for all.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka: Today marks the first time — and a welcome opportunity — that a Head of Government is presiding over the Council's meeting on women and peace and security. I thank His Excellency the President of Spain for presiding over this debate today, for the priority Spain has given to this issue since joining the Council, and for Spain's championing of gender equality for many years. I also thank the United Kingdom for its leadership on women and peace and security in the Council.

I would like to recognize our three civil society briefers, Julienne Lusenge from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yanar Mohammad from Iraq, and Alaa Murabit from Libya. The voices of women leaders and front-line activists for peace are rare in this forum, but I suggest they are the most important voices that will be heard today. Our work with human rights defenders has taught us that they are the true unsung heroes.

Friday's announcement of the awarding of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet underlined civil society's vital contribution to promoting reconciliation and human rights, and we celebrate this recognition. Such peacemakers include the vibrant women's movement, which continues to work tirelessly to safeguard some of the gains made in the context of the Arab Spring and elsewhere, and realize justice and reconciliation through their active engagement in civic life.

In my first two years as Executive Director of UN-Women, I have travelled and followed our work in displacement camps in Central Africa, Syrian refugee camps in Jordan, and in South Sudan, where women peace activists shoulder the unseen burden of keeping communities together in the worst of times and under the worst of circumstances. I have seen both the relevance of resolution 1325 (2000) and, conversely, the many missed opportunities where it has not been put into effect, with dire costs. More recently, I have been to the Philippines and to Colombia, where women continue to make extraordinary efforts to secure peace. Their presence at the table contributed to positive outcomes. The agreements reached represent the interests of women and of society as a whole. UN-Women is honoured to continue to support the formidable Colombian women.

Where women are at the peace table, they are able to make compromises that allow for faster progress, but not at the expense of core aspects of long-term sustainability. In Colombia, where the talks are still ongoing, in the most recent agreement on justice, women have secured an agreement that states that there would be no amnesty for sexual-violence crimes.

We face new challenges. Extremist groups are targeting women's rights as a deliberate, devastating method of subjugation and control. We have to take this very seriously and we continue to focus on it. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's commitment, in his upcoming plan of action to prevent violent extremism, to addressing women's participation, leadership, and empowerment as keys to addressing the drivers of extremist violence. We welcome also his call to extend the 15-per cent financing goal on peacebuilding within the United Nations to cover funds addressing violent extremism. I would like to pay tribute to the work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura, who has done much to raise the profile of this issue and ensure that it is taken as seriously as it warrants.

A growing body of evidence shows that perhaps the greatest and most underutilized tool we have for successfully building peace is the meaningful inclusion of women. This is the highlight finding of the global study that informs this high-level review. The study found that women's leadership and participation ensure the inclusion of community needs to achieve deeper peace benefits, improve our humanitarian assistance, strengthen the protection efforts of our peacekeepers, contribute to the conclusion of peace talks and the sustainability of peace agreements, enhance economic recovery after conflict, and help counter violent extremism. It is backed by extensive evaluations, statistical databases and academic research.

This is an area in which the whole United Nations family, including the Security Council and regional bodies, are now confronted by the need to make irreversible change. That change is to ensure that women are not the missing, yet vital factor to make the lasting peace for which we all long and strive. I am grateful to the study's author, Radhika Coomaraswamy, and the members of the high-level advisory group for the global study, for their time and dedication, which often went beyond the call of duty. I also thank the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and all other United Nations partners for their increased efforts to support gender equality.

Let us now turn to some of the detail of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716) that I have the privilege to present to the Security Council today on his behalf. It recognizes several markers of progress. Between 1990 and 2010, only 11 per cent of peace agreements even mentioned women or gender issues. In recent years, this has climbed to half of all agreements, and the percentage is higher when the United Nations is involved. There are more women in mediation support teams and more regular consultations with civil society leaders. Countries and regional organizations are beginning to take more robust action against sexual violence. Courts and commissions of inquiry are paying more attention to gender-based crimes, even though this has not yet translated into higher levels of prosecution. All three reviews on international peace and security — peace operations, peacebuilding, and women and peace and security — have made important commitments to strengthening our capacity and stepping up our actions in this area. I welcome the Secretary-General's invitation to review the gender-related implications of all three reviews before the end of the year.

But the report also notes many areas of concern and stagnation. Fifteen years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it finds that political will, financing, accountability, attitudinal and institutional barriers, and a lack of expertise and awareness continue to be obstacles. Women's participation is still symbolic or low at peace tables. This is as unreasonable as peace tables that would exclude men. The large investments in rebuilding countries typically neglect women's economic activities or confine women to the informal economy.

Donors do not go far enough to target women's organizations for support, yet it is the latter's dedication to peace that has proven to be the only way that women's needs are noticed and serviced. In fact, only 10 per cent of aid to peace and security interventions in fragile States targets gender equality as a principal objective. Gender equality is almost completely ignored in reforms of the security sector even in the most gender-aware nations.

This is a space that is in need of role models. We need many more women in police forces, military forces and our peacekeeping operations to enhance our operations and peace efforts. Currently, 97 per cent of peacekeepers and 90 per cent of police officers are men. Further, alarmingly, the percentage of girls in secondary education in conflict countries has dropped, and rates of maternal mortality in these settings are more than double the global average. In the midst of the biggest wave of displacement on record, with countless families torn apart or separated, 27 countries still have nationality laws that discriminate against women, thereby contributing to render children stateless.

The United Nations itself has not yet met its targets in gender equality, including gender balance or having gender equality as a focus for spending. For example, we spend more than $9 billion a year on our peacekeeping and special political missions, but we are currently unable to track how much of it is invested in advancing gender equality. And there are still cases of sexual exploitation and abuse in our missions. We are thankful that the Secretary-General has again been raising the alarm over the unacceptable price of inaction on this issue.

On a positive note, I am pleased to announce the establishment of the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action. This new fund will channel more resources to women's organizations building peace and responding to humanitarian emergencies. I invite all countries to support it as one concrete way to respond to the study.

As part of the paradigm shift that can be associated with the study's findings, let us note that the study shows the benefit of investing in preventive action and early warning, rather than retaliatory action. Military spending has a direct impact on the increased suffering of women for generations. Militarization is on the rise and the global cost of violence is estimated at over $14 trillion. We must have faith in our original vision for resolution 1325 (2000) not to make armed conflict safer for women and girls, but to prevent war in the first place. Our challenge now will be taking steps toward proper funding and execution of the study's ambitious targets. Many of the much-needed changes are in the hands of the Member States represented in this Chamber.

As I close, let me remind the Council of the inescapable logic of the study's findings, reflected in the Secretary-General's report, and which should galvanize us to action. These are some key areas. Every peace process we wish to be sustainable must include women. We must incentivize countries to transform the security forces in all United Nations Member States, increasing the numbers of women in leadership positions; we must also learn to value the voice of civilians in peacemaking. We must take strong action against violators, working as a group to ensure that individual countries are not able to shield perpetrators of crimes from justice. We must take steps to build the status of women's human rights defenders, and we must act and invest to prevent conflict. Where conflict is entrenched, we must move away from a view of peacekeeping as a series of short-term projects and treat peacebuilding as a long-term action, with long-term funding, and women as core partners. Preventing conflict and peacebuilding is an institution we need to build and invest in, as we do for the health or education institutions that we cannot do without.

As we look forward now to implementing the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), we should recall the strong interdependence between all the goals. Goal 16, on just, peaceful and inclusive societies, is intrinsically linked to Goal 5, on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Lusenge.

Ms. Lusenge (*spoke in French*): I am the Director of the Congolese Women's Fund and the President of Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral. I am also here on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Seven years ago, in 2008, I came to New York to speak in the Security Council. I described the conflict in my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I set out in detail the sexual violence, murders and massacres. I came to ask for concrete action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the integration of the fight against sexual violence in peacekeeping missions. Today, 15 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and seven years after my first briefing to the Council, I am once again addressing this body. I thought long and hard before deciding to come back here, and wondered whether or not it was worth the effort.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was replete with hope. But what change has it brought about in women's lives — we women in conflict situations? Yanar, Alaa and I come from different regions and situations, but we share common experiences: the exclusion of women in the political, social and economic spheres. That is precisely why nothing has changed. Women should be actively included at all levels of decision-making and peace processes. If we want — and if the Council wants — genuine security and world peace, the Council should at last seriously and definitively include women in all stages of the peace process, whether at the level of women in villages or at the Government level. Coming from the violence in our daily lives, we Congolese women force the door to participate and thus take our place in peace processes, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000).

In 2013, during the talks with the Mouvement du 23 mars (M-23) armed group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as that group was decimating the population and women were suffering violence and unimaginable atrocities, women in North Kivu asked to participate in the process. Does the Council know the answer? There are only two sides in the conflict: either you are with the Government or you are with the M-23.

Therefore, what is the message to our brothers, our sisters and our young people? We must take up arms to be able to come to the table for peace talks. There will never be lasting peace without the participation of women.

Women are the first victims of the war, but they are the key to peace. At the moment, women in Rutshuru, Beni and my own region in North Kivu are being murdered, massacred, slaughtered and eviscerated. They suffer rape and sexual violence, abduction and sexual slavery. They are us: my nephew was killed by rebels of the Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces. I could even provide the number and names of the women killed in the course of a year. In Beni, more than 234 were either killed, strangled or eviscerated.

That is why I and all women ask the Council to implement resolution 1325 (2000) via concrete actions. The Council has heard the desperate cries of women many times, without really hearing them. Do not let them go ignored today. I hope today will finally be the day to put an end to this cycle of violence.

On the ground, we are ensuring that victims become survivors by providing a holistic approach. We help women acquire skills for economic empowerment and to know their rights. We facilitate their reintegration into their communities so that they can participate in development as agents of change. In that way they regain their dignity. The Council must therefore support women's grass-roots groups and the environment for peace they create at all levels.

Women are actively working to build peace. Armed groups attack us and threaten us. They injure us. They try to rape our colleagues. But despite all that, we continue to work. Unprotected, we sensitize young people to dissociate themselves from armed groups and create a welcoming environment for dialogue that can build lasting peace in villages, the country and the region. Those efforts must be supported, not only with words and applause but with concrete actions and means.

The United Nations must identify various approaches to ensure that women have official positions in the building of peace. In that regard, I welcome the Secretary-General's briefing today. I also welcome the appointment of a woman to lead the peacekeeping mission in my country. The platform for women with regard to the Addis Ababa Accord, initiated by Ms. Mary Robinson as Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, is a mechanism that can involve women in the peace process. Unfortunately, the Members of the United Nations are not supporting that innovative mechanism. In the end, three countries have indeed supported it. That has enabled us to bring together the women of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo around the Addis Ababa framework agreement. The United Nations and the international community must demand the presence and participation of women in the peace talks. We must provide women with the means to enable them to attend formal negotiations, and not only at the junior level of the talks.

Justice consolidates peace, and peace is nourished by justice. My colleagues and I contribute to the training of police and magistrates so that they understand the law and the participation of women, so that women can bring complaints to the police and the latter can carry out fair investigations. Police commissioners and certain magistrates and judges now call on us and work with us when there are new cases of sexual violence. And we have won judgements, always in the quest for fair justice. For us, therefore, justice reform boils down to the effective training, equipping and staffing of judicial actors, as well as improving their working conditions and rebuilding prisons. A victim reparations programme should urgently be developed. All perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence, including United Nations peacekeeping soldiers, must be brought to justice.

We urgently need specialized mixed chambers such as those set up for Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, so as to address the serious international crimes that have not been addressed by the International Criminal Court. Beyond that, however, we also need a comprehensive reform of our national justice system.

The international community must continue to support the peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to root out armed groups and secure the places were women live. The leadership of peacekeeping missions should meet regularly with women's organizations and community leaders. They must listen to and quickly investigate allegations made by the local population, and not just dismiss them as rumors. The voices and needs of local people must drive the missions. The Security Council and the United Nations should continue to support local efforts towards stability. A peacekeeping mission cannot become a career; it must be focused and produce concrete results.

The destruction of the Congo has lasted for over 20 years. That is enough now. After 15 years of good intentions, it is high time to give women the authority and the tools with which they can build a better world for everyone.

In conclusion, sanctions must be put in place against leaders who carry out acts of terror and violence during elections. For there can be no democracy and lasting peace without fair elections under safe conditions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Lusenge for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mohammed.

Ms. Mohammed: I am here today as the co-founder and President of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq. On behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, as we reflect on the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), I implore the Security Council and the entire international community to take action on implementing its women and peace and security commitments.

Much of what Ms. Julienne Lusenge has said is applicable to my country, Iraq, and to neighbouring Syria. These situations illustrate why peace will never be established as long as Governments fail to implement resolution 1325 (2000) and consider the rights and concerns of women.

As the world's attention is on the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), let us remember that ISIS arose from ongoing conflicts in Syria and Iraq in which the rights of women, girls, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons and other marginalized groups had already been devalued, leaving them far more vulnerable to abuse by ISIS and other combatants. This violence has helped to produce the largest wave of refugees in modern history.

To understand the crisis for Iraqi women today, one cannot ignore what has happened, beginning in 2003. A Government was formed as a result of politics of division based on sect, ethnicity and gender. This Government failed to uphold the basic rule of law, allowing extremists to take up positions of power. Ten years ago, Iraqi women spoke to the Security Council about their situation. What would Iraq look like if the Council had heeded those calls then and promoted an inclusive process in which women and minority groups were fully engaged?

The situation that we now have in Iraq bears the twin hallmarks of what eventually occurred — the subjugation of women and the disenfranchisement of minority groups. Indeed, instead of building a unified democracy, those empowered by the occupation designed the State and the new Constitution to guarantee their own rule. Speaking in the name of religion, these politicians denied Iraqi women their rights as citizens and as political leaders who could truly represent women.

Women's rights were hijacked by articles of the Constitution that guaranteed the interests of religious groups at the expense of human rights, making Iraqi women vulnerable to sharia law. Since then, Iraqi women have experienced unprecedented disempowerment and violence. In fact, within a decade, a century of women's struggles for better social and legal status was halted by the creation of a State that claims to be democratic but that marginalizes entire portions of its population in policy and practice.

It was only a matter of time before such a Government began marginalizing minority groups, most notably the Sunnis of western Iraq. Building a State on a corrupt foundation subjected millions to poverty and hunger in a climate of sectarian hatred. These are the politics that paved the way for the creation of ISIS and the enslavement of Iraqi women for the first time in our modern history.

When I speak about the enslavement of women, I am speaking of the countless women being trafficked, in both ISIS- and Government-controlled areas. For example, over 3,000 Yazidi women and other minorities were enslaved by ISIS fighters. We, at the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, have documented the execution of over 150 women in one area controlled by ISIS, because they refused to obey the so-called Islamic State.

In the absence of Government-sponsored services, local women's groups meet the needs of those most vulnerable to the conflict. We are at the forefront of providing aid and services in places unreachable by international aid organizations. Yet, we remain vastly underrepresented in our efforts to prevent and address conflict and violent extremism. Our rights are not protected, let alone promoted.

The use by ISIS of sexual and gender-based violence has been discussed at length in this Chamber, yet civil society efforts that seek to combat this violence are stifled. Iraqi authorities do not allow women's organizations to provide shelter to the thousands of women fleeing conflict-related violence. Furthermore, independent radio stations that promote peace across sectarian divides, dispel misogyny and combat homophobia have been shut down.

Discriminatory laws and policies prevent women who are fleeing armed conflict, honour crimes, trafficking, abductions, sexual and gender-based violence and forced marriage from obtaining legal identification without the approval of a male family member. Perpetrators of honour killings receive mitigated sentences, if they are punished at all. Reforming these laws now will build more equitable and inclusive foundations for the long term. Such reforms must also be pursued in times of peace, for without them, discriminatory practices and social norms, including the denial of services and stigmatization of rape survivors, become exacerbated in times of conflict.

Research demonstrates that women's meaningful participation improves peacebuilding and sustains efforts to counter extremism. The inclusion of Syrian women in the Geneva peace process is therefore critical, not only to safeguard women's human rights but also to produce an accord that will prevent a resurgence of violent extremism in the region.

With support for ISIS and other violent extremist groups being voiced by individuals from the Philippines to Yemen and from Europe to West Africa, extremism is not just an Iraqi or Syrian problem; lessons from our region must be applied globally. Together we have the tools, evidence and resources to implement strategies for inclusive and lasting peace. The full and holistic implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and international human rights standards provides a comprehensive road map for the prevention of armed conflict and the integration of gender equality across all peace and security actions.

What is primarily lacking is the political will. I urge the Security Council to act now to condemn all forms of violence against civilians on all sides of the conflict; remove legal and practical barriers preventing non-governmental organizations from providing vital services, including shelters; increase support and protection for women's organizations and women's human rights defenders; call on Iraq and all other Member States to fully implement and fund national action plans on resolution 1325 (2000), in consultation with civil society; and prosecute those responsible for violations that amount to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence. We are documenting these abuses and their perpetrators and will be ready for the day when they will be held accountable.

I urge the Security Council and the entire international community to take action on its commitments. We cannot wait another 15 years for the women and peace and security agenda to be implemented.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Mohammed for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Murabit.

Ms. Murabit: I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to address it on this historic occasion.

When I was growing up, my mother told me she always saw everything, courtesy of the two extra eyes she had in the back of her head. I made many attempts to disprove her, and needless to say, I was caught every time. What I did not know then was that my mother had just taught me a valuable lesson and that I would use it daily in my work as a peace and security advocate: that the very women who lead families and societies know first and best what is happening in them and how to address it.

My organization, the Voice of Libyan Women, launched its first national project, the Libyan Women's Charter, in 2011. In the midst of revolutionary euphoria, we spoke with thousands of women nationally, who expressed their excitement at the potential opportunities that awaited them. But even then, they recognized and spoke of the challenges, of how tensions would grow if transitional justice and reconciliation were not sought out through legitimate structures, of the growing security risk of the open Sahara border, and of their increasing exclusion from the political arena. They listed their priorities with clarity and purpose: to get the weapons out of their homes and their family members back to work. As history has since proven, their words were the truest reflection of the impact of unaddressed conflicts and increasing insecurity.

Women did not just speak while men vied for power and property. It was women who began to piece the country back together. It was women who in record numbers founded organizations and initiatives and who through education, media, political reform and economic empowerment were fighting for a truly free

Libya. During the next three years, women were the first to feel the effects of ongoing fighting and the first to notice the signs of rising extremism. In fact, as early as 2012, they warned of the increasing danger in driving alone, the increasing calls for school segregation and how religious manipulation was being used by religious and political leaders to promote polarization in their society.

It was on that basis that my organization launched the Noor Campaign, led by women and built on their partnership with men and religious actors to build peace and security in Libya. By leveraging the strengths of women in our national network — their ideas, community credibility, unparalleled networks and influence — we were able to reach communities, men and boys in particular, in staggering numbers, enlisting them as our partners in countering extremist messages and preventing violence.

As a member of the high-level advisory group concerned with resolution 1325 (2000), I can tell the Council that our experience in Libya is not unique. In conflict and post-conflict countries around the world, women are seen as less threatening politically and economically and, for that reason, garner more societal trust than their male peers. In fact, the importance of including women seems to be a glaringly obvious strategy. As recent events have made clear, extremist organizations not only recognize women's agency but are extremely effective in speaking to and working with women for their own advantage, to the detriment of global peace and security.

We know how much the women and peace and security agenda needs the continued commitment of the United Nations. That is an undeniable fact. However, a less acknowledged truth is that the United Nations and its Member States are not meeting the expectations of the global community, and that is because they continue to ignore the one tool that has never been more urgent for us to utilize — the participation of women at all levels.

The ongoing peace process in Colombia, for example, has so much to teach us. After more than 60 years of war and countless peace processes, all exclusive and all failing, the political process was opened up with the help of the United Nations and Norway's mediation. Both sides brought victims' voices and experiences to the negotiating table, 60 per cent of whom were women. They humanized the war, mobilizing their communities to support the peace talks. I wish we had a civil society representative from Colombia in the Chamber today to show us what gains can be made when the United Nations and Member States work together to ensure inclusive peace processes.

From my own experience in Libya, I know that the only reliable requirement for admission to peace talks is a gun. The lack of actionable commitment by the United Nations and its Member States to women and peace and security beyond these walls only validates those who exclude women from negotiations at home. The United Nations must prioritize the inclusion of women here.

A few years ago, religious and political actors met with members of the international community in Libya to discuss transitional justice and rising city and tribal tensions. As they were seated, one of the international representatives thanked the Libyan counterparts for attending. Noting the low number of women in attendance, he asked: "Where are the women?" His Libyan counterpart looked around and replied with a laugh: "Well, where are yours?"

Women's inclusion is paramount to global stability, and their action on the ground needs to reflect our commitments on paper. I would like to make three recommendations based on the my own extensive work and that of my civil society colleagues working on the issue of women and peace and security globally.

First, conflict prevention is paramount to ensuring global peace and security, rather than only reactively addressing erupting conflicts and adopting overly militarized, band-aid strategies, which promote rather than diffuse local conflicts. The United Nations, Member States and the Security Council should instead address underlying drivers of conflict. Resources, expertise and influence should be concentrated on the prevention and mitigation of conflicts. That means focusing on justice, global disarmament, effective economic policies, representative political structures, accountable media and social freedoms.

The participation of women is critical in the prevention of conflict. Women already engage in unofficial prevention practices in their communities. That should be recognized and institutionalized into official early warning systems and programmes. The engagement of women cannot continue to be one of convenience, when women are included only to implement processes that the United Nations and Member States have decided in their absence. Women must be engaged at the very onset at the decision- and policy-making level. An example is the countering of violent extremism strategy; the narrative is one that is very militant. The aim of women peace activists is to prevent violent extremism.

Secondly, we urgently need a mechanism to address crisis situations. Emergencies are not gender-neutral. Research has proven that they disproportionately affect women and girls, who are often assaulted, exploited and abused for personal and economic gain. Women's rights are violated as they are forced into marriage by armed groups and forced into religious conversion, and women's rights activists are targeted for violence for their own activism or for that of male family members.

While there have been increased efforts to ensure more effective gender programming by organizations and Member States alike, they are uncoordinated, unenforced and insufficient. The United Nations needs to create an accountable and authoritative first-response structure within the Security Council, such as an informal expert group that will guarantee greater coordination throughout the multilateral system and provide greater relief to defenders of women's human rights who are at risk on the ground.

Finally, there is an arguable need to allocate adequate resources and increase the financial commitments made to women and peace and security. That must be accompanied by the removal of structural, political and bureaucratic barriers that limit the accessibility of funds and resources to activists on the ground. Dedicated contributions specific to programmes led by women that address the distinct needs of women in conflict and post-conflict environments are vital.

There is no doubt that resolution 1325 (2000) was a tipping point for the global community and the women and peace and security agenda, opening doors and shifting the political discourse. I am of the new generation of women peace activists, from a country that was under dictatorship 15 years ago. Yet the 1325 agenda proved to be relevant to me and no doubt will be to women and societies in other countries for years to come. But we cannot forget that it was the relentless leadership of civil society activists, veterans of the struggle for peace, that ensured the adoption of that very resolution 15 years ago.

We are not backing down. Every day, we put our lives on the line and do our part for peace. It is time for the United Nations and Member States to do theirs. Only by partnering with women and civil society organizations on the front lines can we counter the rising threats of insecurity, whether extremism, resource exploitation, mass migration, global warming or any of the myriad causes of conflict. It is time we shifted our support back to where it matters most — women.

When the Security Council finds it unthinkable to address a crisis without addressing women's rights, when humanitarian responders have full funding for their gender-specific services, when women grass-roots leaders find their work fully funded and politically supported, when it is unimaginable that peace talks be held without women's full engagement, only then will the full potential of resolution 1325 (2000) be realized.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Murabit for her briefing.

It is my understanding that the Council is now ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/774, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, the Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Monaco, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted, unanimously, as resolution 2242 (2015).

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of the Government of Spain.

Gender inequality is a threat to international peace and security. That is one of the main conclusions reached in the work on the issue of women and peace and security that led to resolution 1325 (2000). I would like to add that such inequality is an injustice and is immoral and a hindrance to the progress of humankind. Resolution 2242 (2015), which we have just adopted, is the outcome of the collective efforts of States Members of the United Nations and civil society. We are establishing a renewed, solid and ambitious basis for the upcoming 15 years with regard to the women and peace and security agenda. I would like to highlight the dedication and enthusiasm that everyone has shown in this undertaking, and I wish to highlight the leadership shown by the Secretary-General and express my gratitude to the United Kingdom, the pen-holder with whom we have worked in perfect harmony.

I would also like to thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and representatives of civil society for their contributions during the opening of this debate. Their testimonies have given us the inspiration for this meeting.

Achieving peace, combatting terrorism and developing disarmament processes has a greater chance of being successful if there is growing participation by women. We are pursuing a dual objective with resolution 2242 (2015). First, we are seeking to enhance the protection of women and girls in situations of conflict. We must spare no effort in combating sexual violence, which is used as a weapon of war and terror. Very often, in conflicts, it is more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier. Secondly, we are seeking to substantially increase the role played by women in areas ranging from conflict prevention to peacebuilding. Experience has taught us that it is vital to bridge the gaps between what is approved here and what takes place on the ground. Women are key to preserving and building peace. Their contributions are vital in response to the folly of conflicts. In places such as Colombia, the Philippines, Central America, Liberia, Nigeria, Afghanistan and so many others, women present an example of dignity and courage.

Spain has a praiseworthy past in this area. That reflects our total commitment to equality between women and men. At home, we have approved a strategic plan for equal opportunities and a national strategy for the eradication of violence against women. We have a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we are promoting a gender focus in peacekeeping missions. Spanish cooperation also has specific guidelines for establishing a strategic relationship with UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund. Nonetheless, our collective effort with regard to the women and peace and security agenda must be renewed and strengthened, and we commit to do the following.

We will update our national action plan, and we will approve periodic follow-up reports, which will be submitted to our Parliament. We will establish a national focal point and create an international network of focal points. We will involve civil society in designing and providing follow-up to our actions. We will enhance training on gender equality for members of the armed forces and the state security forces, particularly those who are deployed on international missions. We will continue to promote the participation of female soldiers in peacekeeping operations and ensure that women are present in mediation teams. We will continue to strictly implement the zero-tolerance policy with regard to incidents of sexual violence involving members of Spanish civilian and military missions abroad. We will also increase the percentage of our official development assistance earmarked for women and peace and security. We will contribute to funding the Gender Unit within the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat in 2016. In addition, in 2016, we will make a contribution of €1 million to the new Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action and the multi-agency Fund for Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict.

We must establish certainty and reasons for hope to replace uncertainty and unease. The enhanced protection of women and girls in situations of conflict and a greater role for women in preventing conflict and fostering peacebuilding are necessary for building a fairer, more peaceful and united world. Resolution 2242 (2015) serves as a guide and calls us to act. I invite all gathered here today to roll up our sleeves and work together.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to the other members of the Security Council.

Baroness Verma (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and civil society speakers present here today for their leadership on this agenda. We welcome resolution 2242 (2015), which was adopted today. It makes clear that leadership and accountability for implementation are required by all actors. We echo our thanks to the Spanish Prime Minister for working with us on this important resolution. I strongly echo the call for everyone here to make meaningful and practical commitments to fully implementing resolution 1325 (2000). The United Kingdom firmly believes that the fifteenth anniversary must represent the start of a new era on women and peace and security. Let us begin that change today. I will, therefore, announce eight areas where the United Kingdom will act.

First, in arranging all future peacebuilding events hosted by the United Kingdom, we will identify women involved in the conflict and shine a torch on them to ensure that their voices are heard. We will promote the active participation of women in such peacebuilding discussions through political and/or financial support. We will also provide support, including lobbying, at the highest levels, to ensure that women's voices are represented in wider peace processes, negotiations and State-building. We will also provide support at the local levels so as to build the capacity of women to participate effectively.

Second, the United Kingdom will contribute $1 million of start-up funding to the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action to help address the global deficit in funding for the implementation of the resolution. We will also provide additional funding of over $800,000, each year for two years, to support new research at the Centre for Women, Peace and Security at the London School of Economics, bringing total Government funding from the United Kingdom for the Centre to over $3 million.

Third, the United Kingdom will ensure that all future relevant military doctrine is gender-sensitive. By November 2016, all United Kingdom troops deployed on overseas missions will receive training on women and peace and security and on preventing sexual violence. We are reviewing the external training we provide through our peace support operation training centres with a view to delivering additional training on women and peace and security and on preventing sexual violence to overseas troop-contributing countries. The review will also help to develop train-the-trainer packages, which can help further disseminate this work. We are expanding and strengthening the pool of gender advisers within the Ministry of Defence.

Fourth, conflict prevention and early warning remain at the heart of this agenda. The United Kingdom will ensure that, by September 2016, all our early warning and joint conflict analysis and assessment tools are fully gender-sensitive. Next, over the next five years, the United Kingdom will drive forward the preventing sexual violence in conflict initiative. We will tackle impunity for sexual violence crimes, while ensuring widespread implementation of the international protocol on the documentation and investigation of sexual violence in conflict.

Fifth, we will encourage greater support for survivors, including children and men, and we will work with other Governments to deliver a more effective multilateral response.

Sixth, the United Kingdom will champion the road map to action to protect women and girls in emergencies and help secure positive outcomes for women and girls at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

Seventh, the United Kingdom will continue to provide technical and other support to help other Governments develop, implement and measure the impact of their own action plans on resolution 1325 (2000). We will also help Iraq and Afghanistan implement their action plans.

Finally, the United Kingdom will ensure that our overseas work to counter violent extremism includes upstream activity targeted specifically at women. Women will be at the centre of the delivery of programming of overseas extremism work, both nationally and locally.

We strongly support the recommendations for the United Nations on women and peace and security set out in the three major reviews this year, and we will work with others to ensure that they are implemented. Just as we, Member States, must deliver on our responsibilities, the roles of the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and many other United Nations entities are critical to move matters forward at Headquarters and in the field.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom will pledge to update the Security Council on our commitments at the annual debate on this agenda item and, to that end, I call on others in the Chamber today to join in our ambition and do likewise.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Family and the Promotion of Women for Angola.

Ms. Delgado (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, we wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, Prime Minister of Spain, for presiding over this open debate, which demonstrates the commitment of Security Council member States to the high-level review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also thank the Secretary-General for his leadership on the subject under consideration and for his comprehensive briefing.

We welcome and thank Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, for her long-standing commitment to the defence and protection of women's rights and for introducing the 2015 report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716) on women and peace and security. We furthermore welcome Ms. Yanar Mohammed, President of the Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq; Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Director of Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises and President of the Executive Board of Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral; and Ms. Alaa Murabit of the Voice of Libyan Women. We thank them for their contributions and for sharing the experiences of civil society on this issue.

The year 2015 is crucial for women's rights, the efforts of the United Nations towards gender equality and strengthening the women and peace and security agenda. We recognize the importance of this year's important dates for the United Nations and for the improvement of the gender issues on its agenda, namely, the seventieth anniversary of the Organization; the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security; the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and the inclusion of gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1).

We express our concern with the growing number and the nature of armed conflicts, the new and emerging threats to peace and security, the increase in violent extremism and terrorism and the exponential growth of civilian victims, with women and children as the main victims. According to the latest report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, over the past decade the number of people in need of international humanitarian assistance has tripled, with 50 per cent of them affected by armed conflicts.

We recognize that prevention is the best channel to address potential conflict situations. We believe that women play a crucial role in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding.

Over the years, the Security Council has proved its invaluable commitment to furthering the women and peace and security agenda by adopting several resolutions, including in the area of leadership in conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. However, obstacles and challenges still persist that prevent the full implementation of this agenda when it comes to the implementation of the four pillars of resolution 1325 (2000), namely, prevention, protection, participation and peacebuilding and recovery.

In Angola, women's participation was a decisive factor in efforts to achieve peace. The post-conflict experience was confirmed in their direct involvement in the peacebuilding efforts. It also showed that they were instrumental in providing psychological support to the victims of the armed conflict as counsellors of peace for national reconciliation and social harmony.

In that regard, the Government established counselling centres to raise awareness of women's civil, political, economic and social rights as a tool for the participation of families in the country's development, in accordance with the Constitution of Angola. Through partnerships with civil society organizations, efforts have been deployed in order to solidify their social participation in the country's political and economic life.

The non-governmental organization Peace Roots was born with the objective of bringing together women from all political parties represented in Parliament to participate in the efforts to consolidate peace and democracy. Also, an association called Pro-Change Country was established to raise awareness among men of the need to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence.

Owing to the experience accumulated in conflict prevention and resolution processes, Angola has been playing a role in the preservation of peace and democracy in Africa, especially in the Great Lakes region, as well as in promoting the culture of peace, dialogue and national reconciliation. We underscore the inclusion of many women in the various levels of defence, security, domestic order and migration services.

The country has also made significant progress in the formulation of its national plan of action to implement resolution 1325 (2000), to be carried out starting in 2016. This plan sets out seven strategic objectives, with specific activities, goals and performance indicators as follows.

First, we should increase the participation of women and integrate gender equality into all stages of peacebuilding processes, including at all decision-making levels.

Secondly, we should provide training and ensure the empowerment of all women, girls and boys, as well as military and policy officers, in peacebuilding processes, both with regard to gender equality and gender-based violence as well as other relevant aspects of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

Thirdly, we should promote and protect the human rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations, their economic and social empowerment and their participation in civil society, taking into account the need to prevent and eliminate gender- and conflict-based violence and promote the empowerment of women.

Fourthly, we should deepen and broaden understanding of the subject of women and peace and security, including through training and awareness-raising in all ministerial departments, civil society and among political decision-makers.

Fifthly, we should encourage civil society's participation in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Sixthly, we should promote rural communities' socioeconomic development while raising awareness of their rights, increasing food security and contributing to poverty eradication. And lastly, we should include a gender perspective in the national budget with a view to fulfilling the commitments established by resolution 1325 (2000).

Finally, we hope that the high-level review will help to lead us to a world where women can effectively play the role they deserve and enjoy their full rights. We hope that a strong political will and commitment to attaining those objectives will make a tangible contribution to expanding the role and participation of women in maintaining and building a more just and peaceful world.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing and presiding over today's debate. Your presence is a real show of Spain's leadership on the issue of women's empowerment. I thank the Secretary-General for his continuing leadership in the area and Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka for her briefing and her stewardship of UN-Women. My deepest respect and admiration go to Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Mohammed and Ms. Murabit for the extraordinary work they do and for taking the time to come and speak to us today. Their bravery in pushing women's empowerment in their own societies leaves us in awe, and their bluntness today in describing the dashed hopes of many over the 15 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) should motivate us all.

Fifteen years ago, the Council adopted a resolution recognizing that the inclusion of women's voices in decision-making on peace and security leads to more equitable, sustainable and resilient results. That is not a theory; it is a fact. The global study commissioned by the Secretary-General on the resolution's impact and the challenges we still face offers ample evidence of that. One qualitative study found that peace processes with female participants demonstrated a 20 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years. In the Security Council, we are not faithfully advancing international peace and security if we are not doing everything possible to ensure that women are included and empowered in peace processes.

As others have noted today, the past 15 years have seen some measurable progress. That is evident in the advances of individual countries, particularly in the area of women's participation. When resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, women in Afghanistan could not leave their homes unaccompanied by a man. Today, Afghanistan has two women governors, four women

Cabinet members, 150 women in the judiciary and a 28 per cent representation of women in Parliament. Progress is also apparent in the greater involvement of women and greater attentiveness to gender issues in peace processes. Over the past 15 years the percentage of peace treaties referencing women has increased nearly two and a half times, to 27 per cent, and, as others have noted, during the ongoing peace talks in Colombia, a dedicated gender subcommittee was established to ensure that gender issues were considered and women's rights recognized.

But the numbers and stories also reflect how far we still have to go. The number of women members of parliament around the world has roughly doubled over the past two decades, but the current proportion is still a mere 22.5 per cent. In my country it is at a record high of just 19 per cent. Even in the case of the Colombian peace negotiations, there is nothing close to gender parity, and the increased inclusion of women came after active organizing and lobbying by female leaders. Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland and current Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Climate Change, recalls a female leader in civil society once telling her that "a typical peace process involved bad men forgiving other bad men in fancy hotels in front of television cameras". Not every aspect of that image rings true today, but it is still entirely too familiar.

Moreover, women continue to be harassed, assaulted and murdered for daring to speak up or get involved. Last year a prominent, remarkable woman named Salwa Bugaighis, a friend and colleague of Ms. Murabit who had previously resigned from Parliament in Libya to protest its lack of women, was murdered in her home on election day. Just yesterday, an Afghan woman named Toorpaki Ulfat, a human rights defender and employee of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, was killed as she headed to work in Kandahar. Around the world, too many other women continue to be harassed or imprisoned by their Governments for doing nothing more than speaking up on behalf of their communities, including 18 of the 20 women profiled last month by my Government on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration.

In the face of such continued challenges, there are two areas I want to highlight today in which the Council should play a particularly active role. The first is peacekeeping. As the Secretary-General has reported, the insufficient number of women peacekeepers interferes with core mission tasks such as protection and engagement with female members of communities. That is why, at last month's peacekeeping summit, President Obama called for more women leaders in critical mission roles. It is why we will all benefit from the fulfilment of the pledges made by several nations, including Rwanda and India, to contribute more female troops and police.

In addition to more women wearing blue helmets, we must take every possible step to root out sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, which is too prevalent. Countries must train their peacekeepers better in order to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and must hold any soldier or staffer who commits such crimes fully accountable. As President Obama said last month and as the Secretary-General has made clear, there should be zero tolerance for them. Yet too often today their perpetrators enjoy impunity.

Secondly, the Council must ensure that women are full participants in combating the threat of violent extremism. That is essential not just because women and girls are often the victims of groups such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, it is because defeating those groups will require women's leadership and active involvement as community influencers and leaders, whether in village councils or here in the Security Council. That fact has been recognized by some diplomats, leaders and States; the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, has worked actively with civil society and women's rights organizations during his consultations and negotiations. The Iraqi Council of Ministers endorsed an emergency plan in May that made reference to resolution 1325 (2000) and called for measures to address the needs of women and girls in conflict situations and facilitate their involvement in post-conflict reconstruction.

Well beyond ensuring the Council's engagement in those two core areas, there is much more that each of us here can do. In all of our respective roles as States Members of the United Nations, national representatives and individual leaders, we must look inward. Within the United Nations family we must continue to integrate and act on the goals of resolution 1325 (2000). That includes supporting the Secretary-General's commitment to elevating the work of senior gender advisers and including more women in the senior ranks of the United Nations. It means ensuring that all United Nations agencies and bodies engaged in peace, security and development take responsibility for integrating women's voices into their work, and that should be measurable.

As national representatives, we must hold our own Governments to account. In the United States, our Government has been moving forward with its national action plan. The Department of Defense, to take just one example, has taken important steps, including through integrating objectives relating to women and peace and security into its policy strategy and planning. At the State Department, 35 per cent of mission chiefs are now women — an improvement of the 10 per cent level of 20 years ago, but still not yet half.

As part of this national action plan, we are also assisting other nations in their own efforts, and today I am pleased to announce new commitments to that end totalling $31 million. To describe just a few examples here, that includes more than $40 million for initiatives to protect women from violence and promote their participation in peace processes and decision-making, as well as more than $8 million to implement United States Secretary of State Kerry's accountability initiative to fight impunity for sexual violence in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia. Another $1 million will be allocated to a justice initiative based in South Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It seeks to educate 50,000 women on their human rights and how to use basic judicial procedures.

Finally, as individual leaders we must look inward to see what more we can do in our own positions. For women, and particularly for men, it is not enough to be passively supportive of women's participation. Whether it is pressing one's capital about progress on one's national action plan, or pressing for women's participation in internal decision-making processes, all of our support must be active and vocal.

Just last week, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the four leaders of the Tunisian Dialogue Quartet. One is a woman — Wided Bouchamaoui. She is not a politician or a lifelong activist; she is a businesswoman and the head of a Tunisian employers' union. Her contributions and the accomplishments of the Quartet are a timely reminder that even in the midst of grave national crises, there is still reason for hope, above all when women are able to join men at the table. As she put it last week, "We did it together". I would only elaborate, "We will do it together, or we will not do it at all".

Ms. Maira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Spain for convening this important debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and the testimony given by each of the briefers. Women and peace and security is one of the priorities of Chile's multilateral foreign policy. That was demonstrated during our term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and within the Group of Friends of Resolution 1325 (2000). In those forums, we renewed our commitment to the implementation and promotion of that resolution.

We welcome the adoption this morning of resolution 2242 (2015) in the context of the 2015 high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. In particular, we emphasize the work done by members of civil society over the past 15 years, and the establishment of follow-up mechanisms to improve and broaden the implementation of the agenda on women and peace and security throughout the United Nations system.

Chile was the first Latin American country to have an action plan in 2009 on the safety and protection of women in armed conflicts. That commitment was reaffirmed in a second national plan of action announced by the President of the Republic Michelle Bachelet on International Women's Day on 8 March. This second plan defines four areas and objectives that we would like to share as good practice: prevention, participation, protection and relief and recovery. We have incorporated quantitative indicators and designated institutions responsible for their implementation in order to enhance transparency and accountability.

We firmly believe that improving the status of women is a collective responsibility of our region. We are aware that the intensification of armed conflicts and violence in post-conflict situations have particular repercussions. That is why we are working from a global perspective and through regional cooperation to broaden the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by designing training and capacity-building programmes to advance Latin American women in that regard.

At the regional level, Chile participated in the workshop on gender and security organized in Asunción by the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Paraguay. We also hosted the regional training workshop on gender and security and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), at which the participanties shared their countries' experiences with respect to gender mainstreaming and gender equality policies.

In August, President Michelle Bachelet delivered the closing statement at the regional training workshop on gender and security and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) that was organized for countries members of the Central American Integration System in El Salvador. Under the auspices of the Union of South American Nations, we sponsored a seminar on mainstreaming gender in military training and defence institutions and a workshop on the adoption of gender concepts in the South American Defence Council.

In New York last April, Chile co-sponsored with the Netherlands an international workshop on the integration and implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) in operations in the security sectors, organized by the non-governmental organization Global Network of Women Peacebuilders. The workshop made recommendations as a contribution to a global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), entitled "Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing peace", which will be officially launched tomorrow.

At the national level, this year the Ministry of National Defence of Chile has coordinated various activities for Chilean troops deployed in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. They have been trained in gender issues, the scope of resolution 1325 (2000), human rights and international humanitarian law, the responsibility to prevent and protect against gender violence and sexual abuse in peacekeeping operations, sexual violence and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. In addition, Chile's National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies will be launching a joint academic programme with the Inter-American Defence College that will mainstream gender in academic activities and in the dissemination and research conducted by the two institutions.

Today, the women and peace and security agenda represents a substantive effort to promote inclusive development as an overarching strategy for conflict prevention, its resolution and for the maintenance of peace and its consolidation in the world. The goal is to make decisive progress in the implementation of the spirit and substance of that resolution, incorporating compliance indicators and expanding mechanisms for action and dissemination of its contents. However, it is not enough to abide by the principles of the resolution and increase the female contingent and civilian personnel deployed in peace operations in which our countries are cooperating.

We must be able to translate those principles into inclusive public policies that guarantee women the full exercise of their rights in all areas of human endeavour. Because, ultimately, how can we promote greater participation by women in decision-making in peace and security work if in our nations they are barely represented in the halls of power, do not participate on equal terms in the labour market and violence against them is still a serious social problem?

Resolution 1325 (2000) recognizes and promotes the participation of women in decision-making bodies for conflict resolution advocating a profound cultural change that recognizes women as subjects of law and agents of reform for the rebuilding of peace and security in conflict and post-conflict situations. Chile is committed to strengthening the institutional policy of Chile's Ministry of National Defence by mainstreaming gender in all predeployment training for peacekeeping operations in which Chile is involved.

We shall monitor accountability regarding gender violence among staff serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations within two years, and we shall appoint gender advisers and a national focal point for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in relevant ministries and departments within one year, as well as for receiving and sending information to and from missions. We shall also establish an observatory, consisting of representatives of civil society, to report on progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in our country.

The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) continues to be one of our national and collective responsibilities, because it is becoming increasingly clear that no peace and security are possible without the effective participation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural processes that cut across all our societies.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Nigeria welcomes you, Mr. President, to the Security Council and thanks the Spanish delegation for organizing this seminal debate. We acknowledge the presence of participating ministers and welcome them to the Security Council.

Our appreciation goes to the Secretary-General for his abiding commitment to the cause of women, to the Executive Director of UN-Women for her powerful exposition, and to Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Murabit and Ms. Mohammed for their courage and soul-searching testimonials.

Nigeria welcomes the opportunity to reflect on the broad progress made in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda 15 years after the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). Periodic reviews of this nature could help in galvanizing action and resources to address existing challenges and gaps in advancing the role of women within the context of the global peace and security architecture. We also welcome the positive developments achieved at the strategic and operational levels across the pillars of prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery in implementing the women and peace and security agenda.

Despite the significant achievements, significant gaps and challenges remain. Those include the leadership and political participation of women in decision-making, women's involvement in peace efforts to prevent and resolve conflict, insufficient resources and funds, lack of disaggregated data, forced displacement exacerbated by persistent armed conflict, and continuing unprecedented levels of sexual violence and assault. Meeting those challenges is critical to making progress in the women and peace and security agenda. It requires a multistakeholder approach involving actors at the global, regional, subregional and national levels. Communities, civil society and individuals also have a pivotal role to play.

At the global level, the Security Council has provided the leadership necessary to give impetus to the women and peace and security agenda. Beginning with resolution 1325 (2000), which set up the scaffold for subsequent Council resolutions that utilized the scaffold to build the women, peace and security agenda, the Security Council has been at the forefront of that evolving approach.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has also played a constructive role in advancing the women and peace and security agenda by promoting the greater involvement of women in peacekeeping. According to United Nations data, 29 per cent of the 6,800 international civilians working in special political missions and peacekeeping missions are women. That is highly significant. Even more significant is the fact that women lead five peace operations as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General.

In addition, three all-female police units are deployed in three United Nations missions around the world. According to DPKO, the participation of women as peacekeepers provides a greater sense of security to women and children, improves access to local women and makes United Nations peacekeepers more approachable to women. In view of the spectacular challenges that women face in post-conflict situations, those are highly significant considerations. We commend DPKO for the importance it attaches to the situation of women in the context of peacekeeping operations.

Other important actors within the United Nations system are UN-Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We take this opportunity to pay special tribute to the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, for their astute leadership and untiring efforts to advance the women, peace and security agenda.

At the regional level in Africa, the African Union (AU) has been a valid instrument and platform for the advancement of the women, peace and security agenda. In January 2014, the African Union Commission signed the Framework of Cooperation Concerning the Prevention and Response to Conflict-related Sexual Violence in Africa, with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Its major focus is on preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The agreement complements the ongoing efforts of the African Union Peace and Security Council, which is working to institute a code of conduct and a zero-tolerance policy that clearly outlines the AU's strong position against sexual violence and exploitation by AU troops. The agreement strengthens the collaboration and common commitment of the African Union and the United Nations to combat impunity and promote accountability, implement capacity-building and training programmes, foster better coordination, national ownership and leadership, facilitate the provision of multisectoral services, and alleviate the stigma and trauma of victims.

The African Union Agenda 2063, which was adopted by African heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in January, is designed to build a more prosperous and peaceful continent. The Agenda places particular emphasis on the engagement of women and youth in the continent's development.

At the subregional level in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been a major driver of the women, peace and security agenda. In collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa, in September 2010 ECOWAS developed a subregional and integrated plan of action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan of action emphasizes the importance of the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, mediation and peacebuilding efforts, and in the rebuilding of post-conflict societies.

ECOWAS has put in place very strong mechanisms regarding the role of women in conflict prevention and management, such as the Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. Those mechanisms serve as the basis for the ECOWAS conflict-prevention framework. The women, peace and security component of that framework aims at consolidating women's role, participation and impact at all stages of conflict management, including humanitarian provisions, while reinforcing various national and regional mechanisms for protecting and promoting them.

At the national level, in August 2013 Nigeria launched a national action plan to fully implement the relevant provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan reflects the federal Government's commitment to ensuring the security of women and girls during armed conflict and enhancing their active and direct participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We are also committed to the provisions of resolution 1820 (2008) on ending acts of sexual violence against women in conflict situations.

In concert with our neighbours Chad, Cameroon, the Niger and Benin, we are cooperating within the framework of a multinational task force to fight the Boko Haram insurgency, which is targeting women and girls. We are resolutely determined to defeat the terrorists. Because of the transnational nature of terrorism, we take this opportunity to call on all people and nations of good will to renew their pledge to support the fight against that menace.

We acknowledge the contributions of civil society organizations as partners in peacebuilding, prevention and the management and resolution of disputes. The Nigerian Government will continue to engage them as key stakeholders and partners in the women and peace and security agenda.

Nigeria remains fully and firmly committed to the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. We shall work assiduously to enhance the participation of women in peace and security initiatives. We are determined to reinforce and implement the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) and, within that context, to address the factors that impact negatively on the lives of women and girls.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes Spain's initiative in convening this open debate. We welcome Prime Minister Rajoy Brey to preside over today's meeting. I wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing, and the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngucka, for hers as well. China has also listened attentively to the briefings by the representatives of civil society.

This year coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the holding of the fourth World Conference on Women, and also with the fifteenth anniversary of the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

On 27 September, China and the United Nations jointly sponsored a global summit on women: the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Empowerment. The President of China Xi Jinping and representatives from over 140 countries, including more than 80 Heads of State and Government, attended the meeting. The summit was the first of its kind in which commitments on women were made at the State leadership level. It is another milestone of the international cause of women following the Beijing Conference and is of trailblazing significance. The leaders of countries committed to further implement the outcome of the Beijing Conference. That is of great and far-reaching significance for the development of the global cause of women. Resolution 2242 (2015), which was just adopted, also acknowledged the global summit on women.

With the efforts of the broad membership, of United Nations bodies and of regional and subregional organizations, the international community in recent years has made progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), with major achievements in promoting a greater role for women in peace and security. On the other hand, the present international security situation remains complex and grave. Regional conflicts crop up here and there. Women often bear the brunt of rampant terrorism and violent extremism. The international community has a long way to go in protecting women's rights in conflict. In that regard, I would like to stress the following points.

First, we need to step up efforts to find political solutions to hotspot issues and foster an international environment favourable to women's development. The international community should stand firmly by the values of peace, development and win-win cooperation; vigourously take forward the political process of the relevant conflict-affected countries to promote national reconciliation and resolve differences through dialogue and consultations; and provide security protection and humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected women. At the same time, effective measures must be taken to ensure that women have full rights to participate in every stage of peace processes and that their voice and demands are heard.

Secondly, we need to tackle both symptoms and root causes in order to promote the simultaneous development of various issues in conflict-ridden countries, including women's issues and economic and social development. The international community should help conflict-affected countries to actively carry out post-conflict reconstruction, and in the affected countries the focus should be on capacity-building and socioeconomic development in order to remove the root causes of conflict and ensure that women and the population as a whole will have a fair share of the dividends of development. The international community should provide development assistance and technical support to developing countries in their efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, and attention should be paid to providing guidance to women's organizations and civil society in playing a positive and constructive role.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to shape a harmonious and inclusive social culture. In their rebuilding efforts, post-conflict countries should strengthen the rule of law, eliminate discrimination, bias and acts of violence against women; to vigourously promote gender equality; to remove the roots and soil in people's mindsets that inhabit women's peace and development; and to facilitate harmonious social development in post-conflict countries so that society will be more inclusive and dynamic.

Fourthly, the existing mechanisms of the United Nations should be fully enabled to act so that each can play its own role, creating synergy. The Security Council should fully perform its primary role of maintaining international peace and security, with a focus on properly addressing women and peace and security. It should strengthen coordination with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and UN-Women, among others, in line with their respective responsibilities. With respect to addressing issues of women and peace and security, United Nations agencies should give full play to the existing mechanisms, tapping their potential to improve their effectiveness. They should be cautious about setting up new mechanisms.

At the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women that was held on last month, President Xi Jinping announced new commitments in support of the global cause of women. First, with respect to funds, China will donate $10 million to UN-Women to support the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action, as well as the relevant Goal of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. Secondly, as a project commitment, within the next five years China will take a series of measures to help developing countries address the challenges facing women and girls in the areas of health and education and will strengthen the training of local women. It will jointly set up with the United Nations, under the relevant fund, a project to support capacity-building for women in developing countries.

Those commitments fully embody China's firm determination and concrete action to promote the sound development of the global cause of women. China will fully implement the new commitments made by President Xi Jinping at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women and is ready to work with all parties in our continued, unremitting efforts to promote the implementation of the goals of women and peace and security and to push for greater development of the global cause of women.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Let me begin by thanking Spain for organizing this open debate. We are grateful to the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and all the other speakers for their substantive contributions to today's discussion.

This month marks the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), which enshrined the topic of women and peace and security on the Council's agenda. The importance of its implementation and the commitment of States to achieving its objectives were recently underlined once again at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, which was recently organized at United Nations headquarters by the People's Republic of China and UN-Women. We congratulate the organizers on its successful holding, which once again underscored the importance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which remain key guidelines in the context of expanding the rights of and opportunities open to women over the past 20 years.

In the Beijing Declaration, States reaffirmed their determination to take the steps necessary to achieve peace so as to promote the advancement of women and recognized the leading role that women have played in the promotion of peace.

We voted in favour of resolution 2242 (2015), which was prepared by Spain and the United Kingdom and was designed to take stock of the 15 years of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and to set out the main guidelines for further efforts by Member States and the United Nations system as a whole in the important task of ensuring the participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution. There is no doubt that, given the particular importance of the resolution and its comprehensive character, which encompasses various areas of activity of the United Nations and the international community as a whole, the preparation of this document was a very difficult and ambitious task.

Unfortunately, the late issuance of the global review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the lack of time to carefully study and consider all the aspects of the recommendations made had an impact on negotiations on the draft. As a result, we believe that, in a number of cases, it was impossible to come up with tried-and-tested language that fully corresponds to the various mandates and remits of the various entities, including those of the Security Council involved in counterterrorism activities.

In the course of negotiations, our position was that it was important to avoid any distortions and to maintain the existing divisions of labour, as doing otherwise could have an adverse effect on the work of all those bodies.

We do not believe that it is justified, in the format of the discussion of the resolution adopted today, to prejudge the outcome of other review processes under way in the Security Council on issues of peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations. We do not agree with the view that there is a need to set up an informal expert group on issues relating to women and peace and security. We believe that the creation of new bodies is no guarantee of the effectiveness of the work of the Council. Overall we feel that it is a dubious approach that is aimed at establishing more and more auxiliary bodies covering various items on the agenda. It is also inappropriate to refer this issue to such a structure within the Security Council, owing to its informal character.

Given the increase in the number of armed conflicts, we believe that it is important for the Security Council to focus specifically on issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe also that specific violations of human rights, including those of women, should be considered in specialized international bodies.

Despite the aforementioned shortcomings, we hope that the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) will contribute to the effective implementation of the multifaceted tasks facing the international community in the framework of the women and peace and security agenda. Given the importance and relevance of this issue, we deemed it necessary to vote in favour of the draft.

The report of the Secretary-General outlining the results of the global review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) clearly indicates that over the past 15 years, progress has been achieved in promoting the participation of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and in post-conflict reconstruction. We would like to individually thank all of those who participated in the preparation of these documents.

We find it encouraging that in 2014, women were part of every mediation effort by the United Nations, as well as the majority of national delegations, in nine of the 12 peace processes involving the United Nations. The number of peace agreements containing specialized provisions pertaining to women has increased significantly. The number of women in parliaments and Governments in countries emerging from armed conflict has also increased, and work in this area should continue.

In this context, we support a number of the conclusions reached by the Secretary-General, for example, the fact that there is still insufficient participation of women in conflict-resolution and post-conflict-reconstruction processes, despite the existence of an official normative framework. We agree that there is a need to prevent conflicts at an early stage. At the same time, we believe that conflict prevention must be based on international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

The recommendation of the global review on taking a localized approach to the issue of women and peace and security is very useful. This takes into account the specific features of each individual conflict. We agree that cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all approaches based on so-called best practices that are applicable to all countries and situations are not effective.

We continue to call on the Security Council, in considering the issue of women and peace and security, to work on the basis of the existing divisions of labour within the United Nations system, without duplicating the role of such bodies as the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, all of which have their respective mandates. Consideration of issues related to the topic of women and peace and security cannot substitute for the whole broad range of commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women that have been undertaken by each State.

Our position continues to be that national plans of action on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be used as an instrument to assess national policies aimed at enhancing the status of women. Such plans should be drawn up on a voluntary basis by those States that are in the grip of armed conflict or at the post-conflict reconstruction phase. As noted by the Secretary-General, the drawing up of such plans is not an end in itself; the outcome is what is important.

The Russian Federation, for example, does not have such a plan. However, we have put in place all of the conditions necessary to fully realize the potential of women. This has made it possible to attract many bright, highly qualified women to politics. Russian women are also active participants in the social and political spheres. For example, they make up more than 70 per cent of civil servants. Women currently occupy the positions of Chairperson of the Federation Council, Deputy Speaker of the State Duma, Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Russian Federation and Minister for Health Care, and also serve as high-ranking officials of local executive bodies in a number of regions.

Women are actively involved in the work of civil society in Russia. To date, one third of all non-profit organizations, and we have tens of thousands of them, are women's organizations, which do a great deal of social and charity work aimed at supporting women, children and families; prevent domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual violence; and other activities important to the community.

Today women face new and increasingly serious threats. In areas controlled by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Jabhat Al-Nusra, Boko Haram and other terrorist organizations, women are increasingly becoming the victims of targeted violence, forced marriage, sexual slavery and human trafficking. Violence against women is used as a means of intimidating the local population and disrupting established social connections.

There is no doubt that the international community must put an end to this appalling situation. The combat against terrorism and the coordination of efforts in this area should remain a priority in the work of the Security Council and other specialized agencies of the United Nations system. Consideration of cross-cutting issues, including gender equality and the advancement of women, should be carried out based on the appropriate mandates, so as not to decrease but enhance the effectiveness of the work of those bodies. Only through joint efforts and appropriate coordination of the efforts of all stakeholders, first and foremost all Member States, based on strict compliance with international law, can we achieve the desired results.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General and the Prime Minister of Spain, Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, for their outstanding efforts to promote the women and peace and security agenda of the Security Council. This has allowed us to celebrate today the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), which is at the heart of so many of the other resolutions adopted by the Council and also at the heart of France's priorities.

I also wish to acknowledge the outstanding work of the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, whose coordination role to promote this agenda and gender equality within the United Nations is absolutely essential.

Finally, I wish to thank Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Mohammed and Ms. Murabit for their poignant testimonies and their relentless commitment to giving Congolese, Iraqi and Libyan women a voice, a place and a chance in their respective societies. Their commitment is a source of admiration and inspiration for us all.

This high-level meeting on the issue of women and peace and security does not only mark the anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) 15 years ago, nor is it a simple review of the progress made since 2000. It represents a new start for the women and peace and security agenda — a new start for more equality. In that regard, I welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), which will allow us to pave the way for a revival of the women and peace and security agenda in the years to come. I wish to emphasize two aspects of that relaunch.

First, it is a political revival, in the best sense of the term. Indeed, the women and peace and security agenda is a political agenda and should be treated as such by States and the United Nations. States have the responsibility to ensure the more active participation of women in political processes, peace negotiations and conflict resolution and prevention mechanisms. States have the responsibility to involve women's organizations in policy discussions, not only to hear their voices but above all to enable them to contribute to decisions. It is also the responsibility of States to appoint more women to key positions, including with respect to the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The United Nations also bears this political responsibility. The appointment of more women to the positions of special envoy or high-level expert alongside the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is a step in the right direction. Such policy decisions must multiply. It a question not of symbols but of added value critical to the Organization.

The review of the women and peace and security agenda also represents a new operational framework. In particular, the maintenance and consolidation of peace require more women, not only in peace operations, but also through all the issues related to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The planning and mandates of operations should take these issues into account at all stages of a crisis: upstream, to prevent risks; during, to protect women from violence; and afterwards, to help victims to rebuild. Good cooperation between the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support with UN-Women is indispensable to that end. I commend the efforts of those Departments to take better into account the situation of women in peacekeeping operations.

I have stressed the responsibility of Member States and the United Nations for the implementation of measures related to the women and peace and security agenda. I wish to conclude my remarks by citing France's actions in that regard. Since 2010, the French Government has adopted two national action plans for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. These national action plans are subject to an evaluation of the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights and our Parliament. To that end, France has mobilized several million euros to support some 50 projects dedicated to strengthening the capacities of women in countries in conflict, such as Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to Syrian refugee women living in camps in neighbouring countries, with the support of UN-Women and several non-governmental organizations.

You have asked, Sir, that this high-level review serve as an opportunity for States to announce specific commitments. I wish to share three instances of France's commitments.

At the political level, France is committed to strengthening its mobilization to promote the women and peace and security agenda nationally, internationally and regionally. At the national level, we will increase the visibility of our plan of action. France, more than 20 per cent of whose ambassadors are women, is committed to achieving the target of 40 per cent women appointed to high-level diplomatic positions by 2018. That process is well under way.

At the international level, we will pursue our efforts in the Security Council to ensure that the provisions of resolutions on women and peace and security are well represented in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as they are in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. In the European Union, we continue to advocate for the inclusion of women in the Common Security and Defence Policy and to support the protection of women in conflict situations and in crisis resolution.

At the operational level, France — which, through the deployment of over 900 military and police personnel, is contributing to six peacekeeping operations — is committed to the utmost vigilance and resolve to ensure compliance with the rules laid down by the United Nations in the fight against sexual abuse and respect for human rights. The recruitment, training and deployment of our personnel to operations will continue according to a national process that ensures compliance with these rules. In the case of recent allegations of sexual abuse, our political leaders are deeply committed to the adoption of the most stringent sanctions, in addition to the judicial response, where such cases prove legitimate.

Finally, at the financial level, I am pleased to announce that France will contribute €50,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The most recent biennial General Assembly resolution on the fight against violence against women (resolution 69/147), which France and the Netherlands have led since 2006, calls on States to contribute to the Fund. We hope that other States will follow. This contribution complements the financial support to the tune of €100,000 that France will offer UN-Women to strengthen women's access to justice.

This high-level meeting marks not the end but the beginning of an ambitious reform of the women and peace and security. France is determined to accompany this reform for more equality so as to promote change in the perception and treatment of issues related to women in the United Nations. As the French poet Louis Aragon once said, "Woman is the future of man". Woman is also the future of peace.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I thank Spain for having organized this high-level open debate to review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and assess its concrete outcomes. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement, as well as Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, and the civil society activists Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Ms. Yanar Mohammed and Ms. Alaa Murabit for their briefings and testimony.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made by Ms. Bineta Diop, African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted by the Security Council 15 years ago, and was followed by other resolutions calling for enhanced efforts to protect women and to promote their equal participation in reconciliation and reconstruction processes. The Secretary-General's global study on this issue and his most recent report in that regard (S/2015/716) reflect the significant progress that has been made at various levels in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

At the same time, however, it highlights certain serious gaps and failings. The involvement in women in conflict prevention and management and their appointment to high-level positions at the national, regional and international levels remain inadequate. In such circumstances, it would be very difficult — indeed, almost impossible — to ensure any time soon the gender equality that the international community has set as its goal. It is against the backdrop of that challenge that, at its seventieth session, the General Assembly Summit for the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals decided to make gender equality a central pillar of the new development road map at all levels.

Much remains to be done in that regard, beginning with the United Nations itself, which should set the example by further promoting the recruitment and appointment of competent women to various senior posts in the Organization. For its part, the Security Council should fully embrace the commitment it undertook in resolution 2122 (2013) to uniformly implement resolution 1325 (2000) in the context of its work by putting in place a follow-up strategy for its work in that regard.

Moreover, we would like to underscore the importance of close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in achieving the goals of Security Council resolutions on women and girls. In that connection, I would like to welcome the African Union's adoption, in 2014, of its women, peace and security programme, which was an important step in strengthening efforts to raise awareness and improve the capacities of its member States with regard to resolution 1325 (2000).

In the face of the new challenges linked to sexual and gender-based violence posed by such armed groups as Boko Haram and Daesh, which carry out kidnappings, traffic in women and girls and practice forced prostitution, the entire international community and individual States should further marshall their efforts to wage a battle commensurate with the stakes involved.

While fully acknowledging the progress made over the past 15 years, we note that, when it comes to State efforts, only about 50 countries have developed action plans, whose implementation is significantly hampered by the need for financing. In many developing countries, including Chad, the persistence of negative cultural aspects and misguided interpretations of religious principles remain genuine obstacles on the path towards achieving the commitments undertaken in resolution 1325 (2000). Those obstacles could and should be overcome via robust involvement on the part of local communities and traditional and religious leaders, whose major role appears to be ignored in favour of State institutions and non-governmental organizations in the course of seeking adequate solutions. It should be noted that perceptions among local communities have also evolved, and that it is quite possible to make a real difference using their own institutions that see themselves as the guardians of tradition. The integration and participation of women in every aspect of public and private decision-making will make it possible to eradicate negative social norms, reduce discrimination and promote gender equality.

With regard to Chad's own efforts, despite the political determination reflected in resolution 1325 (2000), to date we have not been able to complete our national plan, owing primarily to institutional and technical shortcomings and a low level of ownership. Nevertheless, since 2000, the constant efforts of our national authorities, supported by the agencies of the United Nations system, have made it possible to further integrate women at various levels in all aspects of society. In addition to boosting women's presence in the Government and the Parliament, women have been encouraged to join our domestic security services, especially the Gendarmerie and in the Garde nationale et nomade. For some time, our national police have implemented a 30 per cent quota on recruitment, thereby contributing to promoting gender equality. Moreover, this year, in the context of national women's week and the observance of International Women's Day, the focus has been on the empowerment of women. To that end, for the past four years a special policy has been in place to extend microcredit to women.

In conclusion, I reiterate Chad's commitment to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on the issue, in line with our national legislation, while giving the requisite attention to the recommendations set out in the global study on the implementation of that resolution, as set out in the report of the High-level Panel on Peace Operations and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to the Spanish presidency for convening this open debate. We commend the Secretary-General's dedication to promoting the cause of women. I thank Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and her team for their dedicated work. I also thank Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Ms. Yanar Mohammed and Ms. Alaa Murabit for sharing their experiences with the Security Council today.

Lithuania aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for women's increased participation in peace processes, greater protection from violations of their human rights, improved access to justice, and measures to address discrimination. Today we have to reassess what remains to be done to make our commitments real.

There have been a number of visible achievements over the past 15 years. Thanks to the Justice Rapid Response instrument, there are more trained investigators of sexual and gender-based violence. The increase in the adoption of national action plans illustrates a growing commitment by Member States to implement the women and peace and security agenda. Five out of the 16 peacekeeping missions are led by women, and all multidimensional peacekeeping operations have gender units. However, much more needs to be done, as a real commitment to the women and peace and security agenda continues to suffer from implementation gaps. I would like to underline some of them.

First, much too often, mediation and peace processes remain male-dominated. While women are disproportionately affected by conflict, their critical role in negotiating, keeping and building peace in their communities is often overlooked. In Syria, women's voices remain a minority in attempts at peace talks. In Mali, only five out of every 100 participants in negotiations that led to the Accord on Peace and Reconciliation were women.

What can be done? Education is essential in empowering women with knowledge, skills and self-confidence. Unfortunately, in many conflicts, attacks on schools and the freedom of thought are a common reality. Furthermore, the development of quota systems could, in some cases, provide positive impetus for increased women's involvement. The inclusion of women in Yemen's National Dialogue Conference was instrumental in achieving a commitment that 30 per cent of places in the Parliament must be reserved for women. In Afghanistan, a quota system ensured that 28 per cent of seats in the Parliament now belong to women. That gives them an opportunity to influence major political decisions.

Lithuania has adopted measures to increase women's representation at all levels of governance. Consistent and systematic long-term implementation of gender equality policies and concrete measures, coordination of actions and synergies of all the relevant stakeholders led to a number of concrete results. Women's education rate stands at 90 per cent. Two of the country's highest posts — that of the President and of the Speaker of the Parliament — are currently held by women. Female staff amount to 70 per cent of the public administration.

Our Government will remain a strong advocate for women's representation at all levels of governance, especially in countries recovering from conflicts. Lithuania welcomes the Secretary-General's commitment to earmarking at least 15 per cent of all United Nations peacebuilding spending for programmes that further promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

Secondly, the spread of terrorism and violent extremism has had a horrendous impact on the lives of women and girls. While images and stories of Yazidi women being enslaved by Daesh or girls forced to become suicide bombers by Boko Haram capture our emotions, we need to go beyond the perception of women as victims of terrorism. Seeing women as a driving force in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism is crucial. In September, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), concerning counter-terrorism, chaired by Lithuania, held the first open briefing on the subject with practitioners from the field. Furthermore, as the global study research demonstrates, countries with relative gender equality are less prone to violent extremism than those where the human rights of women are not protected. Therefore, all United Nations counter-terrorism strategies must be linked with civil assistance and human rights programmes aimed at shaping a different social environment, averting extremism and radicalization and tackling the root causes of terrorism.

Thirdly, sexual abuse continues to cast a shameful shadow over United Nations peacekeeping despite all efforts by the Secretariat and Member States. We must act consistently to implement the zero-tolerance policy with a particular focus on prevention, including predeployment training and integration of gender advisory staff in all United Nations peacekeeping missions. Adequate vetting of personnel would further prevent individuals with a history of abusive conduct or sexual exploitation from serving.

Lithuania ensures that all its personnel deployed in peacekeeping missions receive mandatory training on gender mainstreaming and prevention. We are also committed to ensuring an adequate response should sexual exploitation or abuse occur, that is, bringing perpetrators to account. We will pursue expanding the involvement of women in peace operations in both the civilian and military fields.

Last but not least, as emphasized in the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716), women's access to justice remains a considerable challenge. We will not achieve women's empowerment or gender equality if perpetrators of violence against women and girls continue to go unpunished. National capacities to tackle cases of violence against women, including sexual violence and rape, must be strengthened. The international community has to support the capacity-building of Member States as they seek to build independent, impartial and strong judicial institutions.

Lithuania remains committed to supporting national and international accountability mechanisms for the investigation of sexual and gender-based violence and to ensuring that victims are provided with adequate support and redress for the harm they have suffered. The International Criminal Court continues to be an important mechanism in combating sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and should be used vigorously to pursue accountability.

There can be no peace if half of the world's population is left behind. Women are often at the forefront of positive change. The Council has an obligation to act to make sure that this priceless potential is not wasted. In that regard, we welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), which will improve the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda on the ground.

Mrs. Kawar (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the presidency of Spain for convening today's important meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Director of Fonds pour les femmes congolaises, Ms. Julienne Lusenge, the President of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, Ms. Yanar Mohammed, and the Founder and President of the Voice of Libyan Women, Ms. Alaa Murabit.

The importance of today's meeting lies in the fact that resolution 1325 (2000), which was adopted 15 years ago, is an important milestone in international efforts aimed at protecting women from violence and enhancing their role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as in the establishment of fair and stable societies. In the years since its adoption, the resolution has served to increased international awareness of the importance of protecting women and girls, encouraging the participation of women in national, regional and international institutions, particularly in the areas of peacekeeping, conflict management and resolution, and containing risks to humankind. It has also enhanced the legal and normative frameworks with regard to the women and peace and security agenda.

Ninety per cent of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council concerning the establishment or extension of the mandates of peacekeeping operations refer to this agenda. In addition, resolution 1325 (2000) provides a normative framework for many regional organizations and appears in many peace treaties signed in recent years, which make clear references to gender.

However, despite the efforts to ensure the full implementation of the resolution, and despite the time that has gone by since its adoption, many challenges remain. In fact, the concepts of peace and security are now different from what they were 15 years ago. Indeed, some of the threats against women and girls are new. We are also now talking about climate change, the upsurge of religious extremism throughout the world and the unprecedented increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, including women and girls, throughout the world, particularly in the Middle East. The changing nature and form of conflicts, including civil wars, has also become an important element in the violation of human rights.

When we talk about the rights of women and girls in the context of resolution 1325 (2000), it should be realized that the resolution is not just a means to guarantee the participation of women in negotiations during conflicts but it is also necessary for the protection of women during conflicts. In that regard, I would like to pay tribute to the Arab women in Palestine, Syria and Yemen who are still victims of armed conflicts and related persecution. It is therefore necessary that more effective measures be taken to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

Jordan welcomes the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716), such as increasing the participation and representation of women in decision-making posts in the area of peace and security and enhancing gender equality at all levels at the United Nations. We draw attention to the importance of appropriately funding the women and peace and security agenda so that its recommendations can be implemented. That would represent the qualitative and quantitative leap forward needed to implement resolution 1325 (2000) and to meet the changes and new challenges that the women and peace and security agenda is facing.

I would like to highlight some of the measures that we have taken nationally. Jordan signed the political declaration entitled "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality" just last month, which includes a commitment to adopt a national plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000). For that reason, we are in the process of modifying our plan of action in order to harmonize it with the Sustainable Development Goals (General Assembly resolution 70/1), keeping in mind the current regional context, including the constant flow of Syrian refugees into Jordan. We are doing everything possible to provide protection and basic services for Syrian women refugees in our country, pursuant to the women and peace and security agenda.

The role that women can play in countering extremist thought is also crucial. Women can have a positive influence on their children, encouraging them to preserve peace and security and keeping them from being recruited by extremist groups.

Jordan continues to be committed to the promotion of women in peacekeeping and in decision-making.

In conflict resolution, the Jordanian armed forces, also known as the Arab Army, have supported the enhancement of the role of women in the military, with a view to making the forces more efficient. Jordanian women have taken part in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian missions since 2007.

Furthermore, women play an enhanced role in the Kingdom's health services through their work in field hospitals outside the country. Women also play an important role in welcoming and providing protection and services for Syrian refugees. In the context of international cooperation, we are studying the gender element in security programmes, with a view to creating a strategy to increase the participation of Jordanian women in our security forces in collaboration with NATO.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Jordan will continue to enhance and guarantee the protection of and respect for the rights of women and girls in our legislation and to promote women's empowerment so that they may increasingly participate in decision-making. We will also continue to protect the rights of women and girls from all forms of violence, and we will enhance capacities with governmental and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Ramirez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, President of the Government of Spain, and we thank the Spanish delegation for its initiative in convening this important debate. We would also like to commend the briefings by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and by Under-Secretary-General Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, whom we congratulate for her tireless and successful work as the Executive Director of UN-Women. We would also like to thank Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Ms. Yanar Mohammed and Ms. Alaa Murabit for their important briefings.

Gender inequality and diverse forms of violence against women and girls result from various phenomena supported by deep religious, political and sociocultural roots that have prevailed throughout history in many countries, creating massive and ongoing violations of the human rights of women and girls. That is an unacceptable situation.

Exclusion, inequality and the different forms of sexual violence against women and girls in times of armed conflict only reflect and exacerbate the imbalances and inequalities that women suffer in non-conflict periods. Those inequalities generate the conditions of specific vulnerability that require urgent attention and the highest political commitment. If we do not address that injustice in peacetime, we will be even less able to do so in times of armed conflict.

We are celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), which recognized the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls, and the key role that women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as in peacebuilding and the consolidation of peace. We welcome that.

There have been significant advances in the normative sphere in the past 15 years. Nevertheless, great challenges and a sense of frustration remain, since women in situations of armed conflict continue to suffer disproportionately from the brutal consequences of those conflicts. They remain the objects of recurrent and systematic violence and sexual abuse. That situation is, unfortunately, linked to the strategic, ideological and financial objectives of extremist and terrorist groups, such as the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Al-Nusra Front, the Army of Conquerors and Boko Haram, among others.

In addition, women are underrepresented in forums devoted to peacebuilding and the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The situation provides clear evidence that, throughout recent years, genuine political commitment to the issue has been lacking. We are convinced that the participation and contributions of women at all levels, stages and areas related to conflict management are essential in order to prevent conflicts and achieve lasting peace. There can be no international peace and security if we do not include or have due consideration for and incorporate half of the world's population, namely, women and girls.

Venezuela is a land of peace. We have no areas of armed conflict in our territory, and we do not participate in any. That is why our Bolivarian revolution is at the forefront of ensuring gender equality and empowering women so that they have the possibility of serving as leaders in our society. Our major battle is against poverty and exclusion. We understand clearly that women have a leading role to play in that fundamental development effort, because women embody and represent the spiritual foundation of our society and the umbilical cord to our culture and our future.

Under the inspiration of the late President Hugo Chávez Frías and as part of our 1999 constitutional process, the Bolivarian Constitution guarantees the broadest human rights for our people and establishes gender equality, while also banning any kind of discrimination against women, whether on religious, racial or ethnic grounds. We do not tolerate any kind of exclusion or violence against women.

Over the past 16 years, women have served, in accordance with our Constitution, as Speakers of our National Assembly and as leaders in our judiciary and electoral bodies; they have also served as moral leaders. We have reformed our penal code to specifically criminalize violence against women. In the ministerial composition of our Government, women are in the majority. In our legislative elections, 50 per cent of the candidates must be women in accordance with the new electoral law.

We have created the Ministry for the Popular Power for Women, and community councils are, in the vast majority, headed by women, through which they manage resources and direct projects aimed at benefiting their communities. Today, women in our country direct fundamental aspects of our society on an equal basis with men. We therefore have full moral authority to demand an end to discrimination and violence against women and girls, and to repudiate the notion of women as sex objects in consumer society or as the spoils of war at the hands of extremists. This world, wracked by violence and extremism, must act more decisively, and its leaders must act with greater political determination to address this injustice.

We welcome the reference in resolution 2242 (2015), adopted today, to the importance of men and boys working together to promote the participation of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and in peacebuilding and post-conflict situations. The "HeforShe" campaign promoted by UN-Women — of whose Executive Board we are a member and which we commend — should serve as a commitment and guide for the actions of everyone, not just women, in times of armed conflict as well as in peacetime.

The prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes is always the best and most appropriate tool for preventing the harmful and devastating effects of armed conflicts on the civilian population, particularly on women and children. It is therefore essential to halt the training, equipping and supporting of non-State actors and extremists, who are used as instruments of political destabilization to overthrow Governments, acting in service to the geopolitical ambitions of foreign actors, and in most cases, they serve only to incite the commission of atrocities, acting with impunity against women and children. Such groups today have covered Africa and the Middle East in blood. They are motivated by extremist ideologies that target women and girls in the most abhorrent and unacceptable way.

If, in line with international law, we fully respected and honoured the ban on the provision of weapons and financial support to extremist groups, there would be a decrease in the operational capabilities of those actors, thus reducing the harmful and irreparable consequences of armed conflicts on the civilian population, particularly on women and children.

We welcome the call made today in the resolution just adopted to continue working to improve the training of all personnel deployed in the field so as to strengthen the presence of gender experts and advisers on the protection of women in the staff of the various United Nations peacekeeping missions.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its support for the zero-tolerance policy with regard to the incidents of violence and sexual abuse that have had taken place or will take place in operations carried out by the United Nations. The Organization should show resolve and coherence regarding the importance of accountability for any personnel who commit such crimes. It is also crucial for the international community to be firm in condemning countries whose personnel commit these types of crimes and encourage them to adopt the measures necessary to punish those responsible for acts of abuse and sexual exploitation committed by foreign forces not associated with the United Nations, so that such reprehensible actions do not go unpunished.

In conclusion, we hope that this wide-ranging and fruitful debate will enable us to act and move forward concretely in resolving this issue. As we have stated, women, girls and boys can no longer be considered the spoils of war or objects of violence and oppression in any society or under any circumstance. That would be an outrage to us as human beings.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): We, too, would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, and the three civil society representatives for their briefings. I would like to commend in particular Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Mohammed and Ms. Murabit for their direct messages and for the challenges they have laid out to the Council.

We thank and congratulate Spain and the United Kingdom for their initiative in convening this debate and for steering us through the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) this morning. It is right that we take a fresh look at the situation of women and girls in the context of global peace and security for, as many have noted, 15 years have passed since resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted.

We can take some satisfaction that, over the past 15 years, we have made progress in ensuring that the women and peace and security agenda is taken into account in international conflict prevention and resolution efforts. That in itself is no small achievement. However, words in resolutions and other documents, even in mandate formulations, only take us so far. As we have heard today, we need to focus on practical steps to improve the situation for women on the ground, rather than just achieving rhetoric. The issue is not new, but the landscape continues to change and, sadly, is worsening. Rising violent extremism, increased numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, and combatants who take no account of the civilians in their midst all affect women and girls disproportionately. The targeted use of sexual and gender-based violence by terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Boko Haram, as part of a deliberate strategy, is a horrendous new development.

This only makes more urgent the need to deal with the threats posed by such groups and the underlying causes that give rise to terrorism. In that broader sense, the fight against terrorism and violent extremism is gender- and age-neutral, but we must face up to the reality that women and children suffer inordinately. That is a reality that must be confronted by the Council, by the General Assembly and by Member States. None of us can say that it is someone else's business. It is a problem we must all own. At one level, we need to bring home to people — whatever their country, religious belief or ethnicity — that the mistreatment of women and children, whether as a deliberate strategy or an incidental consequence of conflict, is utterly unacceptable. It will never be tolerated or accepted. Bullying, domination, coercion — whatever terms are used — are despicable. Those that engage in such behaviours should be exposed for the cowards that they are and they must be held accountable.

At another level, we need to move beyond a security driven approach to conflict resolution. The recognition of women's rights and perspectives must be a part of all programmes and policies for conflict resolution and post-conflict development. Women must be able to play a meaningful and integral part in conflict resolution processes and outcomes. What does that mean in practice? It means that women must be advisers, negotiators, decision-makers and implementers, as well as receivers of a peace process, if it is to have any meaningful chance of success.

In our own small way, New Zealand has sought to play its part. We have had women in front-line peacekeeping roles since the year 2000. We are working to ensure that women are included at more senior levels in future peacekeeping operations. Our national action plan focuses on improving international deployment rates of senior staff within the New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police to increase the numbers of women at decision-making levels in peacekeeping and assistance missions. We also recognize the importance of empowering local women and ensuring equality of access to justice. During our seven-year engagement in Afghanistan, New Zealand helped establish the first Afghan National Police women's committee at the Bamyan provincial police headquarters. Key purposes of the committee are to advocate for and support female police, and the development and implementation of a non-discrimination and harassment policies for all police employees so as to encourage the recruitment and retention of women police officers.

Another vital aspect of the women and peace and security agenda for the Organization, in particular, is to deal effectively with allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by our own people. It is a stain on the work of the United Nations and of the Council that allegations of such behaviour by United Nations peacekeepers continue to be made with a frequency and particularity that brook no easy dismissal. We have taken some satisfaction from the Secretary-General's strong statements that such behaviours will not be tolerated and that perpetrators will be held criminally to account. We agree that there must be a means for ensuring that troop- and police-contributing countries exercise criminal jurisdiction over their nationals participating in United Nations operations where such allegations are made. We also agree with the high-level advisory group that States that do not live up to this should not be allowed to participate in future peacekeeping operations. Most of all, we insist that effective action be taken. This, too, is a problem that we must all own if it is to be dealt with effectively.

In conclusion, I want to affirm that New Zealand — as the first country to recognize women's suffrage, at the national level — remains committed to achieving the reality that women must play a similarly equal role in efforts towards any lasting peace.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): I thank you, Sir, for convening and presiding over today's momentous open debate and for Spain's leadership in the women and peace and security agenda. My delegation wishes to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his remarks, and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women for her in-depth and insightful briefing.

The voices of civil society are intrinsic to the women and peace and security agenda, and I therefore warmly recognize Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Ms. Yanar Mohammed and Ms. Alaa Murabit for sharing their experiences and views.

Malaysia associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Viet Nam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) sparked a sea of change in the way we viewed women's involvement in pursuit of peace and security. Fifteen years and seven resolutions later, our belief in the integral role of women in ending and preventing conflict remains unchanged. However, results on the ground leave much to be desired. In commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), this meeting presents a golden opportunity to make tangible progress in ensuring the protection, participation, representation and empowerment of women and girls in situations of conflict.

In addition, the convergence of the three high-level reviews on women and peace and security, peace operations and peacebuilding provides rich sources for our continued discussion and action. We take this opportunity to thank the lead author, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, members of the high-level advisory grooup and UN-Women for their work on the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that the research and recommendations therein merit full examination and consideration by Member States, the United Nations and all the relevant stakeholders.

We must acknowledge our collective ownership over the women and peace and security agenda in order to realize the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Every stakeholder — Member States, the United Nations, regional organizations, civil society and the individual — can play a role.

We commend the Secretary-General for his renewed initiatives to promote greater representation of women in United Nations senior leadership, mediation teams and peacekeeping missions, as well as to promote better coordination among United Nations entities in mainstreaming the issue of women and peace and security.

In implementing this agenda in the immediate and short term, Malaysia intends to focus on capacity-building in the areas of protection and conflict prevention. United Nations Blue Helmets undertake a crucial aspect of protection efforts in conflict and post-conflict situations. We also fully support the implementation of mandatory predeployment training for peacekeepers on preventing sexual violence, exploitation and abuse.

In order to further the women and peace and security agenda, I am pleased to announce that Malaysia commits to continuing capacity-building training for peacekeepers, including on the protection of civilians, gender and cultural diversity, through the Malaysian Peacekeeping Centre.

With regard to post-conflict peacekeeping, Malaysia is presently undertaking efforts to offer relevant technical assistance and cooperation to women from countries in transition and that are newly emerging from conflict, under the auspices of the Malaysian technical cooperation programme. These commitments will be reviewed from time to time and will be adjusted accordingly, taking into account the relevant needs and requirements of both recipients and donors.

Resolution 2242 (2015) marks an important milestone in the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda. It signifies the commitment of the Security Council to strengthen the integration of women and peace and security concerns across its body of work through innovative approaches and enhanced information sharing.

I thank the delegations of Spain and the United Kingdom for leading this important initiative, while emphasizing the necessity to build trust and inclusive cooperation within the Council in support of this agenda.

Our task for the next 15 years is to ensure that every woman can succeed, especially women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations, and not only stand in the shadows of men. In that regard, I assure you, Mr. President, of Malaysia's steadfast commitment to this outcome both within the Council and beyond.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I would also like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed so that interpretation may be provided properly.

I wish to inform all concerned that we will be carrying on this open debate right through the lunch hour, as we have a very large number of speakers.

I now give the floor to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia. I am especially pleased to do so since Namibia was the country that presided over the Security Council when resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted.

Ms. Nandi-Ndaitwah (Namibia): His Excellency Mr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, appreciated the invitation that you, Mr. President, extended to him to participate in this debate. He, however, delegated me to represent him owing to other equally important State responsibilities. He wishes these deliberations success.

Namibia supports resolution 2242 (2015), which was just adopted and which we believe is one of the instruments that will make it possible to fully implement resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. In the same vein, we would like to thank Spain for organizing this debate today.

Exactly 15 years ago, on 31 October 2000, under the presidency of Namibia, the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000). That resolution recognizes and reaffirms the critical role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as their role in post-conflict reconstruction. Today's debate is very important, as it gives us an opportunity to review the progress made since 2000. No doubt, some remarkable progress has been made both at national and global levels. However, much still needs to be done.

I believe that as nations we have a lot to share when it comes to resolution 1325 (2000). Although the resolution is known as one on women and peace and security, the main element is the importance of world peace. Therefore, the full and equal participation of women at all levels of peacemaking and peacebuilding is central to sustainable world peace and for sustainable development to be achieved. As women, we do not just want to participate, but we want to live in a peaceful world.

The successes of this landmark resolution has raised international awareness on the unique and grave issues that girls and women face during and after conflict.

In Namibia, we have always recognized the link between peace and gender equality. That is what we have learned from our long years of liberation struggle for independence, in which women, including myself, fully participated. Before returning from exile, in his last general address to Namibians in exile, in 1989 in Angola, our founding President and father of the Namibian nation, then President of the South-West Africa People's Organization, Comrade Sam Nujoma, called on Namibian women to be alert and not to allow the country to be messed up once independence was achieved. Therefore, we are convinced, and rightly so, that women played and continue to play a role in achieving and maintaining the peace we have enjoyed since Namibia's independence 25 years ago.

Namibia attaches great importance to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and it will continue to play its part. Namibia was one of the first countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to ratify the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. That Protocol calls upon Member States to put in place measures to ensure that women have equal representation and participation in key decision-making positions and peacebuilding processes.

I also inform members that we recently reviewed our national gender policy and we have included women and peace and security as one of our critical areas of concern. That explains why Namibia is one of the largest female police-contributing countries to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in

Darfur, the Sudan. As a matter of fact, during 2010, we deployed our first full female contingent of 31 officers to Darfur. Namibian women in peacekeeping missions have demonstrated remarkable commitment, high competency and aptitude for innovation.

The move by the Chair of the African Union Commission to establish an Office of the African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security is highly commendable. Since its establishment, it has been busy contacting women in conflict areas in Africa and helping them to decide how best they can contribute to achieving peace in their respective countries.

This year's fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) is an important and historic event that should unite us in working to take concrete action and rally a concerted international effort to promote international peace in ways that involve women at every level. On the eve of the launch of the global study of the resolution's implementation, we have an opportunity to evaluate what has worked and what remains to be strengthened. At the core, while we can acknowledge that improvements have been made, we still see a critical shortage of female players in peace processes around the world. That is especially true in post-conflict resolution. Namibia therefore stresses the need for the United Nations to appoint more women in the areas of high-level decision-making and peace processes, including special envoys, special representatives, peacekeepers, mediators and negotiators. And we urge women to work to achieve leadership positions throughout the Organization.

It is our belief that ensuring a significant presence of women peacekeepers in conflict and post-conflict situations has the added advantage of creating safer spaces for girls and women who have suffered from sexual violence. Studies conducted by the United Nations in support of resolution 1325 (2000), based on experiences in operations in Cambodia, Kosovo, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have also demonstrated that in dealing with women and children, female soldiers do not face the same cultural constraints as their male counterparts and are thus better able to gain information from them. That ability to gain the trust of local populations should be considered a vital component of any peacekeeping operation. Furthermore, the evidence shows that the presence of women can transform male-dominated institutional cultures and promote women's rights within security organs. And since it brings different skills and competencies to bear, the increased participation of women can help create a more trusted and legitimate security apparatus.

Those charged with leading and supporting peace processes, especially the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and regional bodies, should be committed to bringing talented women into peace negotiations and the signing and implementing of peace agreements. We need the Security Council to move the agenda forward from general exhortations to concrete directives on how those entities involved in peacekeeping should promote women's participation as special envoys, special representatives, peacekeepers, mediators and negotiators. I believe that resolution 2242 (2015), adopted today, can lead us in that direction.

Finally, Namibia welcomes the forthcoming 2015 high-level review and the Secretary-General's report on the global study (S/2015/716), reviewing the progress that has been made at the national, regional and global levels in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). The global study, to be launched tomorrow, will help to formulate the global vision and strategies we need to make resolution 1325 (2000) a powerful tool for peace and security. It should lay out concrete, action-oriented programmes with measurable targets and indicators to guide the resolution's implementation in the future. It will improve the prospects for world peace if Member States can use the study as a blueprint for serious examination of their national policies and learn how they can benefit from it.

While establishing the role of women in peace operations, we must also tackle the root causes of conflicts. Conflict must not become a norm in this century. We must silence the guns. As human beings, we have to realize that manufacturing products such as arms and ammunition seems to motivate us to act against our self-interest. Why not stop producing arms and start developing more people-friendly industries that can help us create the necessary jobs and wealth we need for sustainable development? Our individual interests should not cost us international peace, stability and security. Namibia will continue to be committed to achieving that, and we believe that the participation of women will unquestionably enable us to succeed in creating the world we want — a world of peace, in which conflict can be resolved by peaceful means rather than armed conflict.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

Mr. Selim (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the Kingdom of Spain and the President of the Government of Spain for taking the initiative to convene today's meeting on women and peace and security on the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), and for inviting us to participate.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his efforts to highlight this important issue, including in his most recent report on the resolution's implementation (S/2015/716), which particularly emphasizes the problem of resolving the crises facing us of the lack of financing and inequitable selectivity in allocating financial resources, as well as the direct links that the report highlights among development issues, including the importance of supporting countries' efforts to help their peoples achieve their aspirations and of protecting women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. Egypt supports the Secretary-General's call to promote the role of women in its peacekeeping operations and its mediation and conflict-resolution efforts.

Our discussion of the issues related to resolution 1325 (2000) has touched on the lack of adequate attention to some of the chief problems it is aimed at, in particular the degree to which women suffer under foreign occupation, as well as the effects that can result from an overemphasis on the connection between international human rights law and international humanitarian law, which can weaken the systems available for providing protection in both peace and war through the politicization of positions on the various issues linked to the two types of law. Another is insufficient attention to the priorities of national sovereignty and respect for national legislation, along with a reliance on unofficial studies that may not be as precise in evaluating the progress made in achieving goals for women and peace and security.

Terrorism is a threat to peace and security, along with the armed conflicts that afflict many States and regions around the world. In most cases, in fact, it forms an integral part of every conflict. That is a threat our communities face, and the threat level has increased of late. It has affected States' abilities to carry out their aspirations in terms of development and prosperity. Although terrorism threatens the whole of society, women are the most vulnerable. That is a cause to which we will accord great interest as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

Egypt accords great interest to issues of women and their role as a pivotal element in building and maintaining peace. That interest is based on Egypt's efforts in promoting the position of women in different areas. It goes hand in hand with Egypt's broader vision of the empowerment of women at all levels. Egypt has supported the goals and rationale of resolution 1325 (2000) since its adoption, back in 2000, given the importance of this and subsequent resolutions with respect to the cause of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. In that regard, Egypt's support has taken many forms at both the regional and international levels.

The National Council for Women of Egypt has worked out a national plan for follow-up and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the framework of the active role played by women in the area of international conflict resolution. Egypt has become one of 17 African States to develop that kind of national plan. Over the last 15 years, since the adoption of the resolution, Egypt has held a number of activities on that issue. Two regional workshops were organized, jointly with the United Nations and the League of Arab States. Egypt has accorded special attention to issues of training and capacity-building. From 2013 to 2015, the Cairo Regional Centre for Training on Conflict-Resolution and Peacekeeping in Africa has held seven training courses, two courses for the training of trainers and a workshop, all dedicated to habilitating staff and to exchanging expertise on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), under the theme "Inclusion of gender in peacekeeping and peace building", to be complemented by the holding of five additional training courses in the same vein up to June 2016.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my appreciation for the call to convene this important meeting, in which we have been eager to participate in the framework of Egypt's support for the efforts of the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, to promote the role and status of women. Egypt will also be sure to follow up on these issues regionally and internationally in the context of its efforts to achieve peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador.

Mr. Martínez Bonilla (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador is pleased to participate in this important high-level debate on women and peace and security as a country which experienced a lengthy and bloody civil war that ended with the signing of the peace agreements that laid a basis for a process of democratization. That is why we acknowledge the important role that is played by women in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as peacebuilding, as highlighted in resolution 1325 (2000).

On the basis of that acknowledgement, as a country we believe that it is a priority to work in order to achieve greater participation by women in the various peacekeeping operations. El Salvador is making efforts to be able to enhance the participation of women in the six peacekeeping missions in which we are participating, in accordance with what is stipulated in resolution 1325 (2000) and other subsequent Security Council resolutions.

Given the importance that my country places in compliance with this resolution, I am pleased to inform Council members that El Salvador has made efforts at the Government level, with the support of friendly countries and international organizations, to set up our national committee for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. The members of the committee were sworn in on 12 November 2014, and the committee incorporates in its structure 17 Government organizations, the public ministry, academia and civil society. Its main objective is to propose policies and standards that ensure compliance with the resolutions and to ensure that we enhance the representation of women at all levels of the decision-making processes of national institutions and mechanisms, as well as national, regional and international institutions for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

In 2014, the mechanism to promote women as members of the national committee presented a draft document entitled "The Memory of the Fireflies", which was carried out with the support of women survivors and family members of the victims of the massacres that took place in December 1981. That project carried out an anthropological investigation to compile the testimonies of women and to provide psycho-social assistance in safe spaces where they were able to talk about their experiences.

That gave rise to the publication of a book and video entitled "The Memory of the Fireflies", with which we aim to reshape the knowledge of what happened during the massacres from the point of view of their actual life experience and also to preserve oral memory. With that, we aim to promote the reparation process, taking on not only the civilian compensation aspect but also making the experiences of those women more visible.

Furthermore, in August 2015, El Salvador organized the first regional workshop on training for resolution 1325 (2000),with member countries of the Central American Integration System. The aim was to promote the development of national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in other countries of the region. The workshop was inaugurated and closed by President of Chile, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, and the President of El Salvador, Mr. Salvador Sánchez Cerén. Currently, our country is at the forefront of formulating a road map that will make it possible to ensure the follow-up to resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions.

El Salvador expresses its support for all initiatives that would ensure the participation of women in the various peacekeeping contingents, in line with resolution 1325 (2000) and other subsequent resolutions of the Security Council.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the important work done by Spain as President of the Security Council. Similarly, I would like to thank UN-Women for its support and its attendant technical, political and financial support for our efforts in our national committee. At the same time, I would like to call for that support to continue.

We hope that as people become familiar with our experience, other countries in the region will be encouraged to work more thoroughly when it comes to the area of peace and security, especially from the inclusion perspective that is set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad of Senegal.

Mr. Ndiaye (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to commend the Spanish presidency of the Security Council and to welcome the President of the Spanish Government to this important open debate on women and peace and security. I would also like to commend the quality of the report (S/2015/716) of the Secretary-General, as well as to welcome the briefings by the Executive Director of UN-Women and the others who spoke after her. As a historic milestone, resolution 1325 (2000) will contribute to bridging a gap when it comes to the search for lasting peace, reconciliation among people and ensuring justice.

As an integral component of crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes, sexual and gender-based violence breaches the social contract that binds civilians to security forces, undermines the foundations of peace and destroys development efforts. Moreover, discrimination against women in peace efforts, in addition to further aggravating such injustice, runs the risk of sowing the future seeds of resurgent conflict.

The implementation of this programmatic and operational framework, strengthened by other resolutions, led the Council to take into account the issue of women and peace and security in 7 of 13 agreements concluded in 2013 and in 14 of 20 resolutions creating or extending United Nations peacekeeping mandates. I commend the participation of women in all United Nations-led peace mediation efforts in 2013.

However, despite those highly encouraging efforts, women and girls continue to be subject to the lawlessness of warlords. That is why we believe it important, as we pursue our efforts under resolution 1325 (2000) and other substantive texts, to adopt an integrated, holistic approach that prioritizes the political, development and human rights perspectives in order to better keep the peace, break the cycle of impunity and ensure reconciliation and the social reintegration of victims and their former executioners.

That brings me to the question of the empowerment — particularly economic — of women during and after conflict as they take part in the kind of recovery efforts that are so valued by the Peacebuilding Commission. In that respect, I underscore the meaningful contributions that regional and subregional organizations can and must provide to the implementation of that important agenda. In that light, I reaffirm that Senegal, as the seventh-largest troop-contributing country and candidate for non-permanent membership of the Council for 2016-2017, maintains a priority focus on the women and peace and security agenda.

That priority is already manifested by the 60 Senegalese women participating in United Nations missions and the Senegalese contribution towards making the idea of a situation room a familiar concept. Senegal's faith in the leadership of women was highlighted by President Macky Sall's choice to co-sponsor the launching of the United Nations campaign against sexual violence.

In conclusion, I wish to highly commend the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), which Senegal co-sponsored.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Regional Integration of Gabon.

Mr. Issoze-Ngondet (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, and expressing, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President and Head of State of the Gabonese Republic, our deep gratitude for having been invited to take part in today's debate on the crucial topic of women and peace and security. I also commend the presence here of a number of high-level dignitaries, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women.

The adoption by the Council on 31 October 2000 of resolution 1325 (2000) was a historical turning point in the efforts of the international community to ensure greater protection of women and girls in situations of armed conflict. Resolution 1325 (2000) also helped us to recognize the vital role that women must play in the different stages of the peace process, namely: conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Today's debate is an opportunity to take an objective look at the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the light of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing.

Despite our efforts to combat sexual violence against women and girls in armed conflict, it must be acknowledged that the atrocities inflicted against women and girls never have been as appalling as they are today. Indeed, as rightly underscored in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716), we are witnessing an unprecedented increase in the number of displaced women, crimes of sexual violence and other forms of exploitation. That is compounded by the risk associated with new threats such as climate change, natural disasters, terrorism and new warfare technologies. With regard in particular to sexual violence against women and girls in armed conflict, it should be noted that these victims may be traumatized when they lack access to medical care or psychosocial support.

Resolution 1983 (2011), which was adopted by the Security Council in June 2011 at the initiative of Gabon, underscores that sexual violence against women and girls in armed conflict can in some cases constitute a risk factor in the infection and spread of HIV.

Gabon welcomes the inclusion of resolution 1325 (2000) among the Sustainable Development Goals of the post-2015 development agenda, particularly Goal 5 regarding gender equality.

The full participation of women in peace negotiations is all the more important in that it ensures the inclusion of their concerns in peace agreements. Similarly, their involvement in preventing violence, peacekeeping and peacebuilding is necessary for the resolution of conflicts. With respect to the reform of peacekeeping operations currently under way, more women must be involved in the theatres of operations, in mediation and preventive diplomacy efforts, and in the counseling necessary for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence in society.

The number of female staff deployed in peacekeeping contingents must be increased so as to ensure a holistic approach to situations on the ground. Indeed, the presence of more women in these operations could help to ease tensions, create a trustworthy environment and expand the missions' mandates in the field. We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to promote women to senior positions within the United Nations system in general and in peacekeeping operations in particular. The appointment of women to head the United Nations Mission in South Sudan since its establishment in 2011 is a perfect illustration thereof. My country encourages him to continue working to that end.

I reaffirm my country's commitment to advancing the issue of women and peace and security. Gabon has always been a haven for refugees and displaced persons from countries of the subregion that are experiencing conflict situations. It is unfortunate that these refugees and displaced persons consist mostly of women and children, some of whom are victims of violence and abuse. Gabon has always worked to provide appropriate support to these women victims by setting up specialized health-care infrastructure for displaced or refugee women, including those living with HIV/AIDS. Similarly, the integration and empowerment programmes initiated by the Government of Gabon have facilitated the availability of arable land.

Close follow-up of the efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000) is useful. Gabon reiterates its willingness to maintain that momentum. To conclude, Gabon commends the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) and is dedicated to ensuring its implementation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Mr. Klimkin (Ukraine) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to thank the Spanish presidency of the Security Council for having convened this very important debate, which allows us to reiterate and renew our commitment to the full, timely and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

My colleague Foreign Minister García Margallo of Spain, in his statement in the general debate of the current session of the General Assembly (see A/70/PV.21), said that the twenty-first century would be the century of women, and I agree with him. Furthermore, I believe that 2015 is a pivotal year for gender equality and women's empowerment. We have agreed to the inclusion of a separate Goal on gender among the Sustainable Development Goals and to the mainstreaming of the gender perspective throughout the entire programme. This year, we commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

(*spoke in English*)

This year marks 15 years since the adoption of the landmark resolution establishing the basis for the women and peace and security agenda and calling for the special protection and the full and equal participation of women in all conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. Resolution 1325 (2000) and a further six relevant resolutions adopted from 2008 to 2013 continue to provide main guidelines and a real framework for Member States in the development of policy and measures in the above-mentioned areas as well as in the field of minimizing the impact of conflicts on women and girls.

In this sense, we welcome the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), submitted by Spain, as an important instrument to reflect all the changes that have happened since 2000 and introduce a new and important perspective into the women and peace and security agenda. Indeed, women tend to suffer more hardships as a direct result of economic consequences of conflict, are at increased risk of human trafficking and of being forced into sex work, and face the acute effects of undermined health systems. Gender-based violence, including the systematic use of rape and increased domestic violence, has been widely recognized as a pervasive occurrence in conflict.

Ukraine reaffirms its support for the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers, including all civilian staff deployed to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The proper conduct by and discipline over all personnel deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations are vital to their effectiveness. Ukraine, as an important peacekeeping contributor, welcomes the fact that the comprehensive reviews of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding architecture are taking place at the same time as and in interaction with the women and peace and security agenda review. Of course, we strongly support international efforts aimed at addressing the full range of human rights violations and abuses faced by women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations.

Ukraine knows at first hand how disproportionate the impact of armed conflicts on women can be. Due to the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the issues covered by the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) are of particular importance to our country. A vast majority of internally displaced persons are women, many of whom become the sole caretakers of children and older relatives. As of today, around 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been forced to leave their homes as a result of Russia's occupation of Crimea and aggression in Donbas. About two-thirds of adult internally displaced persons are women.

The Government of Ukraine is undertaking a number of targeted steps to address the challenges that the ongoing foreign aggression places on women in Ukraine. Ukrainian authorities fully understand the specific needs of IDP families, and women in particular. The law of Ukraine on IDPs adopted in 2014 was welcomed by the international community, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The law is aimed at ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons, including women, and at addressing key issues in this area, inter alia, by facilitating humanitarian assistance. On 5 March, our legislation on IDPs was amended in order to strengthen their social protection, including by addressing the issue of unemployment.

The full use of the knowledge, skills and experience of Ukrainian women is vital to reaching a solution of the current situation in and around Ukraine. We can cite a number of other examples of women's engagement. They prepare, collect and distribute food, clothing and a lot more in the course of providing humanitarian assistance. Another example is our female Member of Parliament, Ms. Iryna Gerashchenko, who was appointed last year as Special Envoy of the President of Ukraine on the peaceful settlement of the situation in Donbas.

We would like especially to reiterate our commitment to ensuring that global obligations on the women and peace and security agenda are integrated into our domestic policies and laws in order to contribute to the empowerment of women and elevate the importance of women's participation and leadership in all aspects of peace and security, as well as post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

Ukraine confirms its political will and readiness to assume the following commitments and pledges in line with the main objective of this open debate: first, to strengthen the participation of women in political life and public decision-making; secondly, to increase women's role in ensuring peace and security; and thirdly, to elaborate and implement programmes on the assistance to women from vulnerable groups and women who have suffered from domestic violence.

The main document that will enable us to implement these pledges is a national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Government has already developed a draft of this document, in close consultation and close interaction with agencies of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as civil society. The action plan is aimed at promoting women's greater participation in military, political, economic and social life, the peace process, the recovery process, the prevention and combating of gender-based violence, and the reintegration of persons affected by the consequences of the ongoing aggression against my country.

Another important document is the national human rights strategy that was approved by the President of Ukraine in August. According to the strategy, ensuring equal rights for women and men; combating gender-based violence, human trafficking and slavery; and combating domestic violence are defined as key objectives of the human rights policy of Ukraine for thes coming years. Among recent steps, I can also mention a local elections law signed in August. The law stipulates that in multiple-mandate constituencies at the local and regional levels, not less than 30 per cent of each party list should be represented by women or men.

In conclusion, I should like to draw special attention to the case of Nadiya Savchenko who represents the female face of what is going on in Ukraine. A political prisoner and Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Nadiya Savchenko is being kept in custody by the Russian Federation with no legal grounds and despite the fact that under the Minsk arrangements all hostages and illegally detained persons must be released. I should like to reiterate my appeal to the international community to maintain its political and diplomatic pressure on the Russian Federation to cease the practice of suppressing human rights and immediately release Nadiya Savchenko and other Ukrainian political prisoners.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine for speaking in Spanish at the beginning of his statement. Spanish is a language shared by many Members of the Organization, and yesterday we celebrated Spanish Day here at the United Nations.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Social Equality of Israel.

Ms. Gamliel (Israel): I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Chamber on this important topic. However, I feel compelled to begin by speaking out against the unrelenting campaign of terror being carried out against my people. In recent weeks, Israel has been rocked by a spate of violent attacks, stabbings, car bombs and fire bombs. Men, women, children and even infants have been targeted as they walk the streets or on their way home from prayer.

We would expect to hear loud condemnation of such violence, but when it comes to terror attacks on Israelis, the international community and the Council seem to lose their voice. Even this morning, I have heard fellow leaders in this Chamber talking about terrorism while not mentioning a word about terror in Israel, where today we are burying its latest victims.

Unfortunately, Israel is facing a generation of women, teens and even young children incited to hatred, martyrdom and killing innocents, and not to peace and coexistence. A 13-year old boy, instead of going to play outside, comes to kill after being brainwashed. A student who has her whole life in front of her comes to murder. As a woman and as a mother, I believe that education is the key to raising a generation of young people committed to understanding and tolerance. In Israel, the very first words our children learn at school are *shalom* and *salam* — peace.

I am here today as Israel's Minister for Social Equality — a ministry established for the first time in Israel's history to deal with minorities and gender issues and to enhance Israel's efforts to fight prejudice and combat social inequality. Since its founding, Israel has been committed to a vision of a society of equal opportunities. Our Declaration of Independence guarantees equal rights for all citizens, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion.

We believe that women should be free to choose their own path in life, unhindered by barriers and bias. This freedom paves the way for a better and more stable society for all. In our efforts towards peace and security, Israel believes that women are powerful agents of moderation, particularly in the face of extremism. As leaders and decision-makers, we can be a stabilizing force. Especially in my region of the world, women are an untapped potential for more peaceful societies.

As part of our commitment to gender equality, Israel enacted legislation in 2005 that guarantees women's equal participation in public decision-making, peacebuilding, reconciliation and representation of women in all national policy issues. The inclusion of women is the key to opening the door to a sustainable peace. Mashav — Israel's Agency for International Development — has been actively training women from throughout the world to equip them with the necessary leadership skills so they can hold senior positions in society. Israel's commitment to full participation has been recognized here at the United Nations. Israel is proud to have recently joined the 48 States members of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security. Together, we will work to advance global progress towards women's empowerment.

The peace and prosperity of tomorrow depend on the path we take today. Gender equality and equal participation are the first steps on the road to conflict-resolution, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Israel is proud to join its partners on the march towards a new era in which women stand alongside men and lead the way to the lofty goals of peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Women of the Dominican Republic.

Ms. Germán (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Dominican Republic, I should like to thank the Council for organizing today's debate.. This high-level meeting is eloquent testimony to the great interest shown by the Security Council, and particularly the Kingdom of Spain, in promoting women's rights and their role in the field of international peace and security. These topics are of crucial importance in a world where it is important to further develop a culture of protection and solidarity with women, adolescents and girls.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on 31 October 2000, we have seen genuine progress in protecting women in conflict situations and in moving towards their full and total participation in equal conditions in international peace and security processes. We welcome the progress that has been made in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), but we understand that we need to coordinate action in implementing the resolution in order to achieve a more global approach.

The United Nations system has a crucial role to play to that end. We must promote truly effective actions that will allow women to become the main actors in implementing the resolution and not depend on the decisions of others. Focusing attention on the situation of women is even more urgent when we note that women and their families are those most affected by civil wars. They are the targets of kidnappings, they fill the makeshift boats that cross the waters of the Mediterranean, and they remain in conflict zones while their husbands flee persecution and repression.

It is important to recall that we have just adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). This year we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which laid the foundation for the women and peace and security agenda. We are also celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), which confirms the importance of working for the participation of women in conflict-prevention, conflict-management and rehabilitation from conflict.

We have an historic opportunity to continue to promote the development of a focused agenda that prioritizes the value of women's participation as an invaluable driving force to achieve sustainable peace and security. The main role played by women in social, economic and political development in our societies makes equal economic and political rights between men and women logical and correct, especially with respect to preventing and resolving international conflicts. We believe that if women have opportunities, they can contribute at every stage of a peace process, including peacebuilding.

We support the formal designation by the Secretary-General of UN-Women as the coordinating entity within the Secretariat for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We believe that the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security must revitalize and revitalize United Nations action against sexual violence in conflict, including the prevention of sexual violence, accountability and the provision of assistance to victims. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should also have a strategic plan to enhance women's leadership and participation. We understand that the women and peace and security agenda must become a full part of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, given the role that women play as victims, drivers and agents of change.

The Dominican Republic trusts that the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will be a unique opportunity to formulate an agenda of global policies on women, peace and security at the political and operational levels so that we can work together, focused on action that will make it possible to redesign appropriately financed strategies to move forward with this agenda.

In the Dominican Republic, fortunately, there are no armed conflicts. However, the President is working for gender equality and for the empowerment of women in order to guarantee their economic, physical and political independence. To that end, we decided that all plans and projects being considered in the context of the national development strategy to 2030 must include gender equality. We have also adopted a programme to ensure that as of 2016 the respective budgets of all State institutions must include resources earmarked to achieve gender equality and non-discrimination against women. In this year, the Dominican Republic adopted a new law creating a comprehensive system to guarantee prevention, detection, comprehensive care, prosecution, punishment and follow-up with respect to to all forms of violence against women.

We therefore trust that today's debate we will lead to concrete commitments to ensure that women will be respected comprehensively as a permanent priority in maintaining and promoting international peace and security, which the Dominican Republic supports fully.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Health, Social Affairs and Labour of Andorra.

Ms. Ferrer (Andorra) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate Spain on the excellent work it has done in the Security Council and in leading the initiative to convene this high-level debate, which will allow us to make progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). I take this opportunity to wish you, Sir, every success in presiding over the Security Council this month.

I also thank the Secretary-General, UN-Women and the civil society representatives present here for their contributions and leadership in this area.

This year marks 15 years since the historic, unanimous adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) by the Security Council. Since then, we have seen notable progress in favour of women, such as the establishment in 2010 of UN-Women and the international recognition of sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security. Andorra, as everyone knows, does not have armed forces but has nonetheless continued to support United Nations peacekeeping operations and a various initiatives of the Organization. I cannot fail to note our co-sponsorship of resolution 2225 (2015) of 18 June 2015, concerning children in armed conflict, which has some bearing on today's debate and which reiterates concern over sexual violence against girls and encourages States to continue to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy concerning sexual exploitation and abuse.

Resolution 1325 (2000) also urges Member States to incorporate women in decision-making processes. In that regard, I should like to highlight Andorra's experience, which has achieved a gender-balanced Parliament without adopting legislative measures but rather as a result of a society that was able to evolve in terms of equality. Agenda-sensitive legislative power has made it possible to undertake important activities with respect to gender equality. For example, Andorra was the tenth State to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, thereby allowing the Convention to enter into force. On 15 January, we also adopted a law criminalizing gender-based and domestic violence. The law calls for the establishment of a national commission for the prevention of gender-based and domestic violence. Andorra has made a commitment, as it did during the second cycle of the universal periodic review, to endowing that body with the resources necessary to effectively meet its goals.

Also on 15 January, all groups represented in Parliament adopted an agreement to promote gender equality in the General Council. The agreement calls for the development of a white paper on equality and the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action plan for Gender-sensitive Parliaments of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Our experience of recent years has demonstrated yet again the effectiveness of including women in decision-making, and I can confirm that Andorra's commitment to gender equality remains steadfast. The Government of Andorra recently set up focal point for equality policies under the auspices of the Secretary of State for Social Affairs, which is part of my Ministry for Health, Social Affairs and Labour, a Government body that is in charge of coordinating national equality policies. Andorra is also committed to adopting as soon as possible an omnibus gender-equality law to strengthen the existing legislative framework. Also with respect to this future act, the Government intends to adopt a national plan for equality that will draw on the participation of civil society.

Andorra reiterates its commitment to the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security. There is no doubt that the implementation of and follow-up to resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the inclusion of women in decision-making, will promote progress in women's rights and the strengthening of peace and security in the world. In this conviction, it is an honour for me to announce to this Chamber Andorra's decision to co-sponsor resolution 2242 (2015), which was led by Spain and the United Kingdom and adopted this morning.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for National Solidarity, Family and the Status of Women of Algeria.

Mrs. Meslem Si Amer (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to extend to you, Mr. President, our warmest congratulations on the Kingdom of Spain's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We thank you for organizing this very important discussion.

I also thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, and the representatives of civil society for their briefings. I should also like to extend the greetings of the President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, who asked me to deliver this statement on his behalf.

Fifteen years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) to highlight the harmful effects of armed conflict on women and girls. The resolution was the outcome of effective campaigning by women's groups at the international level following the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, as well as of the resolve demonstrated by political leaders at that time.

Yet, despite the efforts of the international community to establish a normative and legal framework, including Security Council resolutions, sexual violence in conflict is on the rise and becoming more complex. Sexual violence is still used as a weapon in war in order to subjugate and humiliate opponents in conflict. With the appearance of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and Boko Haram, collective public rape, sexual enslavement, the selling of women and girls under 14 years of age, along with the ensuing pregnancies and abortions have become signs of the present age of terror and injustice.

This high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000) gives us an important opportunity to implement the women and peace and security agenda and to abide by certain ambitious agreements. Within this framework, I should like to emphasize the following three points.

First, we must reinforce the participation of women and mainstream the gender perspective in conflict-resolution and peacekeeping operations. We must provide the necessary training for the mediators and envoys who participate in mediation and ceasefires and in achieving peace and preventive diplomacy. We must ensure that peace agreements include provisions to strengthen the role of women in conflict-resolution, such as the Algiers Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

Secondly, we must break the silence and raise awareness so as to prevent sexual violence, protect victims and provide them with the opportunity to be reintegrated into their societies. We must also work to reinforce the legal arsenal to protect the victims and punish the perpetrators of such violence. In addition, we must encourage civil society to work to change the mentality and improve the economic and social conditions that lead to an increase in sexual violence.

Thirdly, we have to reinforce anti-terrorism activities at all levels. Extremist terrorist groups continue to commit terrible sexual violence that violates human rights, especially those of weaker groups. We also have to support dialogue and combat violent extremism, as confirmed at the conference held in July.

In many countries, the victims of sexual violence have limited recourse. Until we remedy that situation, the perpetrators will continue to commit these crimes and justice will be out of reach. We therefore emphasize the importance of reporting, protection and prevention by women's groups, leaders of society, religious leaders, and mass media working in human rights. We must support the efforts of the Organization to reinforce the capacities of these groups.

The fight against sexual violence is not limited to the United Nations. At the regional level, the African Union has adopted a its own solidarity initiative to promote international consultations on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. At the national level, Algeria, under the able leadership of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and in implementation of his programmes, has been working hard to reinforce its legal system and to review its laws on the protection and promotion of women at all levels, based on our belief in the effective role of women in achieving peace, promoting social equality and combating all forms of violence and inequality. Thanks to the Government's belief in the effective role of women, Algerian women have made great strides within Algerian society. They participate in decision-making and in the political process. Algerian women currently represent 30 per cent of members of the Algerian Parliament and over 40 per cent of our judges. The chief justice of one of our most important courts is a woman. Algerian women also fought against colonialism and played a major role during the 1990s — the dark years — when they also contributed to reconciliation. They have also participated in the implementation of numerous development projects in my country.

Algeria supports the need to take into account incidents of sexual violence in conflict situations and has incorporated such considerations in all of its special political and peacekeeping missions, as well as in the investigational framework and other mechanisms.

The issue of sexual violence must be taken into account at every level, especially within those groups and committees that are responsible for the follow-up the implementation of Security Council resolutions. We must work for peace and security in order to create a better world. That will not be possible if we do not eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination directed against women. I am especially thinking of sexual violence in conflict situations. As members of the international community, let us recall that we cannot ignore the fact that poverty and ignorance are often two factors that spur on terrorism and extremism. We must eliminate those scourges by using all available means, in particular by empowering women and bettering their condition.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to remind speakers to limit the duration of their statements to four minutes, because, otherwise, we will stay all night and perhaps go into the morning.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Ms. Quintos Deles (Philippines): History has not failed to remind us about the scars and wounds of war, deeply etched in humankind's soul, with war's trail of blood that always leads to a bleeding woman's doorstep and a weeping child's nightmare. The time has come for all Governments to ensure that women are given a greater role in preventing armed conflict or, once it has broken out, in resolving it and ensuring its enduring and inclusive peace dividends.

In the Philippines, we are now striving to accomplish both. Our current endeavours draw their context from long decades of an internal armed conflict involving various armed fronts, and our current peace agenda involves five peace tables. The signing by the Philippine Government of the comprehensive agreement on the Bangsamoro with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on 27 March 2014 was historic, not only because it signalled the end of a long-standing war in the Southern Philippines, but also because it is the first agreement of its kind in the world to bear the signature of a total of three women, who accounted for one half of the negotiating panel of the Government and about one fourth of the total number of its signatories. It is the first such agreement to bear the signature of a woman as chief negotiator, Ms. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer.

Moreover, 69 per cent of the secretariat of the Government panel, including its head, and 60 per cent of the legal team, including its head, are women. The heads of those bodies are under the ages of 35 and 30 years, respectively. The Government panel has committed to enforce the right of women to "meaningful political participation and protection from all forms of violence" in its source document, the framework agreement, which yielded concrete, gender-sensitive provisions in the agreement's four annexes, as well as in the draft Bangsamoro basic law, now pending approval in our Congress. Today, women representatives in Congress are among the staunchest champions of the proposed law, while, on the side of the executive branch, a woman co-chairs the joint normalization committee, which oversees multiple security, transitional justice and socioeconomic interventions aimed at ensuring that peace will endure — not only in the law, but on the ground.

In 2010, the Philippine Government adopted our national action plan on women and peace and security, becoming the first country in Asia to do so. Initiated by civil society and peace and women's rights organizations, the Philippine national action plan rests on four pillars. There are two targeted outputs, briefly identified as protection and prevention, and empowerment and participation; and two cross-cutting support processes, namely, promotion and mainstreaming, and monitoring and evaluation.

The story of the Philippine national action plan may be best told through the metaphor of weaving, more specifically, mat-weaving, which is common to most Asian countries. Just as weaving is not learned overnight, but goes back generations, the Philippine national action plan benefits from decades of consciousness-raising and organizing on the part of women, peace and human rights advocates. The Philippine national action plan condenses time. But, like a good mat, in which all the fibre strands are pulled tightly together, it also condenses space. Building on civil society's energies, wisdom and experience, it wagers on the Government and its instrumental ties — in a word, the bureaucracy — to be the bearers of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Today, the Philippine national action plan has been anchored and provided a legal basis by Philippine law, led by the Magna Carta of women and recent legislation that has adopted human rights and international humanitarian standards. We also have an earlier law that requires all Government agencies and local Government units to allocate at least 5 per cent of their budgets to a dedicated gender and development fund, thereby ensuring the availability of funds for immediate start-up and mobilization needs.

It has not been left to one agency to implement the national action plan, but rather strands of the Government bureaucracy are woven in with the establishment of a national steering committee, initially composed of the heads of nine Government agencies, to which eight additional agencies were added. They are involved in implementing the Government's PAMANA programme, which provides development and good governance interventions in conflict-affected areas. Altogether, PAMANA operates in over half of our provinces.

From the beginning, we did not want the national action plan to end up as just another document that might be good to read and display on the bookshelf, but is neither implemented nor practiced. In the same way that mats have a history of long, hard and sometimes rough use in Philippine households, we intend for the national action plan to be a felt presence, making a difference in women's lives.

The implementation of the Philippine national action plan is a painstaking process, because we want to cover all of the bases, including policy, planning, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, as well as budget considerations. Modest initial results are being reported. Among the outcomes already being gleaned are the increased presence of women in peace negotiations and the implementation of peace accords, the establishment of women-friendly spaces that provide the necessary measure of private and safe space for internally displaced women and girls in evacuation centres, the adoption of explicit gender-equality policies and mechanisms as an integral part of the governance of the armed forces of the Philippines, culture-sensitive trauma-healing programmes for Muslim women, the inclusion of women and peace and security issues in the training programmes for foreign-service officers, and the plan to establish a dedicated team of public prosecutors for cases of sexual- and gender-based violence in conflict-affected areas. Additionally, local Government units in those areas have been given the means to issue their local versions of the national action plan, which complements major funding support from their own resources. And, just two weeks ago, we launched the first Government executive course on women and peace and security, in partnership with a leading national university.

The past five years have enabled us to weave a meticulous overlay of legal frameworks, implementation structures, institutional mandates and, of course, as always, personal passions and inclusive and intergenerational intentions. We must ensure that the national action plan that we have begun to weave will endure the forthcoming transition to a new Administration in 2016. Its strands, emanating from strategic programmes of national and local implementing agencies, must be strengthened and enhanced in both protecting and empowering women, with the aim of bringing all Philippine internal armed conflicts to a peaceful, just and lasting end. The national action plan should be useful. It should be durable. It should make a difference one can feel on one's skin.

We join the urgent call for all United Nations States Members to adopt a national action plan and weave it tightly and strongly to truly make a felt difference in the lives of women and children caught in the middle of today's most violent conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Ms. Cruz-Sánchez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of President Enrique Peña Nieto, I thank President Mariano Rajoy Brey and the Government of Spain for convening this important debate in the context of the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). I would also like to extend my warm greetings to Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women.

The full participation of women in all spheres of public life is fundamental for achieving peace and inclusive development. Mexico has actively promoted the agenda on women and peace and security. As a non-permament member in 2009 and 2010, during the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we contributed to strengthening the legal framework of the Security Council in this area by supporting the adoption of resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009). We welcome the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015).

Today, 15 years later, we have at our disposal more robust institutional frameworks to guarantee the role of women as key actors for stability and peace, as well as mechanisms to prevent sexual violence in armed conflict. The Security Council should not limit itself by tackling this issue in an isolated or ad hoc manner. We believe that a gender perspective should be integrated in a cross-cutting and consistent way in all its decisions.

Peacekeeping operations and prevention and mediation efforts are two concrete examples. In the past, we might have thought that applying a gender focus to peacekeeping operations simply meant deploying a greater number of women on the ground or increasing the number of women in the armed forces. While that is still a priority, a broader concept of gender equality now allows us to realize that all the activities of a given operation — including patrols and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, security sector reform, the promotion of the rule of law and the effective enjoyment of human rights — should take into account the specific needs of women and should recognize the importance of their participation in interaction with local communities.

It is vital to maintain the momentum for women's participation in mediation processes and in the negotiation of peace agreements and agreements to cease hostilities in order to promote national reconciliation based on respect for, and the application of, the human, social and civil rights of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, with support from civil society.

We should keep in mind that every conflict situation requires a different analysis of its effect on women and children, and that all peacekeeping personnel should include a gender perspective in the various aspects of their operations from the moment planning begins. This year, when we are discussing a revision of resolution 1325 (2000) and recommendations for reforming peacekeeping operations, we should seek and encourage synergies and clear road maps in order to set in motion the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

Another relevant aspect of this discussion concerns the need to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to programmes of proven success. For that reason, my delegation considers it essential to guarantee the deployment of specialized gender advisers in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Such a strategy will require that we strengthen all our activities through appropriate coordination with the other organs of the United Nations system so as to avoid duplication and to respect the competencies of each separate organ.

Mexico has reported to the General Assembly on the specific steps it has taken towards its gradual return to peacekeeping operations. As part of our commitments, I would like to recall that we will increase capacity-building and specialized training for Mexican officers, in particular members of the Mexican armed forces, based on the criteria established by resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent related resolutions. To that end, we have already established cooperation mechanisms with a number of countries that will enable us to strengthen our specific activities in the area of capacity-building. Just last week, for example, the Government of Mexico held one such specialized training session at the Centre for Advanced Naval Studies of Mexico, in collaboration with the Governments of Spain and the Netherlands.

Within that framework, we pledge to make the women and peace and security agenda a fundamental component of our gradual return to peacekeeping operations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Ms. Skogen (Norway): Let me start by thanking the representatives of women and civil society who spoke to us this morning.

When resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, 15 years ago, we believed it would result in more sustainable peace and greater security. Today we know we were right. Recent research shows that peace processes that genuinely include women are more likely to lead to an agreement and more likely to last. Therefore, why then are women still often absent from the negotiating table? Why are their voices not heard even when they are present? Although there has been a steady increase in the number of women mediators and gender experts, we still have a way to go.

We have learned that political will and budget lines can put gender on the agenda, even in times of war. That is why Norway has earmarked funds to implement the women and peace and security agenda on the ground. For several years, we have allocated approximately $4 million to the work of civil society organizations. Ten percent of the resources spent on peace and reconciliation efforts in focus countries are to be allocated to efforts pertaining to women and peace and security. Approximately $3.6 million is earmarked specifically for the integration of the gender perspective in our humanitarian assistance in 2015.

We are celebrating progress today, and rightly so. But this is also a day of impatience. Two weeks ago, we all committed to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. We also committed to achieving gender equality and to empowering all women and girls. Clearly, we should know by now that we cannot achieve one without the other.

I am proud to say that in all peace and security efforts where Norway is engaged, women's and men's needs, priorities and rights are to be taken into account. Sexual violence in conflict will be fought. The Norwegian national joint headquarters requires knowledge of resolution 1325 (2000) as a generic demand for all Norwegian personnel who are to be deployed to international operations. The gender perspective is an integral part of all Norwegian predeployment training.

We are proud of the role we have played as facilitator in the Colombia process, where women are at the table and are making their voices heard. Norway aims to increase the participation of women in peace processes. Inspired by the African women mediators' network, we are now establishing a Nordic women mediators' network.

Norway is also providing funding to the Global Alliance of Women Countering Extremism and Promoting Peace, Rights and Pluralism because we recognize the need to get women on board if we are to succeed in fighting violent extremism.

Regional organizations have a key role to play. NATO is now working to integrate the women and peace and security agenda into all its activities and operations. We will continue to work with NATO. Norway also recently signed an agreement on providing support to the office of the African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security.

Fifteen years ago, the Security Council and the United Nations started something big. We depend on their continued leadership. Norway will continue to raise the 1325 agenda whenever there are discussions about peace and security, because we want peace, and we want a peace that lasts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation.

Mr. Rossier (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for having organized this debate. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and the representatives of civil society for their statements. Switzerland welcomes the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), which we co-sponsored.

Fifteen years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), Switzerland remains strongly committed to advancing its objectives. For this reason, I am pleased to announce that we have made the following commitments.

Last month, the Swiss Government decided to provide support to UN-Women in the amount of approximately $50 million over the next three years. Despite the current tight budgetary situation, the Government has nonetheless increased its contribution by 25 per cent, which highlights the importance that Switzerland attaches to this issue.

The substantive participation of women is a prerequisite for the quality and sustainability of peace agreements. Whether it is at the negotiating table or through other channels, women bring new proposals to peace processes that are essential to ensuring lasting peace. This must be a priority, as our track record so far is not good enough. In that respect, Switzerland supports women's networks at all levels, particularly in peace processes in the Middle East, North Africa and Myanmar, and we will continue this support.

Switzerland currently spends approximately $15 million a year on programmes to combat all forms of sexual violence. Most are implemented in emergency situations, especially in post-conflict contexts such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, Nepal, Tajikistan, the western Balkans and Bolivia.

For Switzerland, the fight against all forms of sexual violence will remain a priority in coming years. We will continue to increase our commitment through our humanitarian and development activities as well as through the promotion of programmes to promote peace and address the past. We support, inter alia, UN-Women's Justice Rapid Response, based in Geneva, which is aimed at enabling the quick and thorough investigation of accusations of sexual violence.

Urgent action is further required to prevent and punish sexual abuse by United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations. Switzerland shares the Secretary-General's outrage at such crimes. We call for zero tolerance and welcome the measures that he announced.

The Security Council has repeatedly recognized the need to empower women and increase their participation as mitigating factors to the spread of violent extremism.

Switzerland has been a strong supporter of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, the first global effort to support local initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremism.

Strengthening the role of women will be among the major issues to be addressed by the Fund, to which Switzerland is providing $4 million over the next four years. Moreover, we welcome the inclusion of the women and peace and security agenda in the United Nations plan of action on the prevention of violent extremism to be presented in early 2016. We will actively support its implementation.

Over the past 15 years we have made very good progress on establishing a normative framework for the women and peace and security agenda. Now we need to ensure that we have an effective implementation, monitoring and accountability mechanism. Switzerland will support the strengthening of the role of human rights mechanisms, in particular treaty bodies, in order to enhance accountability in the implementation of obligations relating to the women and peace and security agenda. In this regard, we see the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, given its value added, as the right avenue for so doing.

In conclusion, Switzerland's position is very straightforward. It is high time that resolution 1325 (2000) be finally and comprehensively implemented. To paraphrase the words spoken by Angelina Jolie in this Chamber, we all set the bar.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Mr. Echeverri Lara (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of Colombia, I would like to thank the Spanish Government for its leadership in convening this debate on the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, as well as welcome the presence of Spanish Prime Minister Rajoy Brey here today. I wish also to thank all delegations that spoke before me for their expressions of support for the peace process in Colombia, on which we hope an agreement will soon be signed.

I wish also to thank the Executive Director of UN-Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for their work and their commitment to this issue, which is of particular importance. I wish also to express our gratitude to the representatives of women's organizations who are with us today for their briefings and their contributions.

Resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, was a milestone in the recognition of the role of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes and reaffirmed the importance of their participation therein. The six subsequent resolutions adopted by the Council on this issue have only enriched this agenda.

However, as pointed out in the concept note (S/2015/749, annex) and as can be seen from the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), even though we have made major strides in terms of this agenda, further implementation is still required in order to expand the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding, and to ensure their equitable participation in peacekeeping efforts as well as in the promotion of peace and security.

The global study is in agreement with the report of the Secretary-General on the future of peace operations and the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. These three reports call for strengthening the role of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, not only as a party affected by war, but also as a fundamental actor in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and in achieving lasting peace. The participation of women at the various post-conflict stages also takes on particular importance in this context.

Today I wish to reiterate our country's commitment to the issue of women and peace and security. I wish to highlight several aspects that we believe may be useful.

Colombia is close to achieving peace, as affirmed by President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón in the General Assembly Hall a few weeks ago (see A/70/PV.4). We hope that the lessons that we have learned during our many years of internal conflict and the progress that we are achieving on the path to peace can serve as examples in the context of addressing armed conflicts in other parts of the world.

In the dialogue process that is moving forward today with the guerrillas of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, the Government has succeeded in ensuring that women are effectively represented and have a voice at the negotiating table. Currently, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the

Human Rights Director of the Ministry of Interior, both women, are part of the Group of Plenipotentiary Negotiators, an advisory body in which women members make up the a significant majority.

In addition, forums have been held in different regions of the country, and several delegations of victims have been given an opportunity to travel to address members of the negotiating team. Women made up over 60 per cent of those delegations. A subcommittee on gender was set up precisely for the purpose of ensuring that the rights of women were reflected in the final agreements.

Including in the past century, Colombia has participated in various missions with military or police personnel, in particular by sending observers and experts. For many years, we have received support from the international community. Now we are ready to reaffirm our willingness to cooperate on security. In that regard, we will continue to advise on capacity-building for female police personnel, as we have been doing in several countries, including Haiti. I would also like to inform the Council that, in January, as an expression of our willingness to support the strengthening of international peace and security, Colombia signed a framework agreement with the United Nations on contributing to standby peacekeeping arrangements.

A joint effort by States is the best way of achieving the principles of resolution 1325 (2000). Such is the spirit of today's debate. The Council can count on Colombia in this endeavour to address and overcome the persistent challenges around the world that are hampering progress on the agenda set forth in resolution 1325 (2000).

Since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, States have made significant progress towards greater gender equality and the empowerment of women, who now have real opportunities for leadership at all levels. In that regard, my country is promoting the initiative in support of women candidates for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Organization, faithful to its duty to uphold human rights in an even-handed manner, now has a great opportunity to lead by example by electing a woman to head decision-making at the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Mr. Vershbow: It is more dangerous to be a woman in a conflict zone than it is to be a soldier. That brutal fact led the United Nations to adopt resolution 1325 (2000), 15 years ago. What was the resolution's aim? To inspire a new approach to international security, where the views and actions of women are every bit as important as those of men and where their inclusion is guaranteed.

For too long, the needs and interests of women have been ignored, both during times of conflict and when making and keeping the peace. If peace is to be sustainable, then it must include the voices of women. We cannot ignore half of the world's population.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is proud of its record in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Via our operations in Afghanistan and in the Balkans, we have made a tangible difference to the lives of women in conflict and post-conflict countries.

The root of our success to date comes from embedding a gender perspective deep within our organization and from keeping things as practical as possible. NATO is incorporating gender perspectives into the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of all its operations and missions. Our strategic commands are implementing new guidelines on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. We have a wide network of gender advisers. We are placing gender perspectives at the centre of defence planning and reporting by our member nations. Gender is a key principle of our Defence Capacity Building Initiative with our partners around the world. With Jordan, we are implementing the first trust fund on gender training for the Jordanian armed forces. And in May 2015, we appointed our first ever female NATO Commander, Brigadier General Giselle Wilz of the United States Army, at the NATO headquarters in Sarajevo.

NATO is therefore doing a great deal. But we need to do more, especially when it comes to promoting equal participation within NATO itself. We need to increase the active and meaningful participation of women. To that end, we pledge to share best practices and valuable lessons learned with our allies and partners on increasing female participation at decision-making levels in our own structures; to accelerate the advancement of women in our own headquarters by establishing a women's professional network and mentoring programme; to actively encourage allies to submit female candidates for our most senior decision-making positions; to strengthen our partnership for gender equality with other international organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and the African Union; to finance gender-sensitive research aimed at identifying drivers of radicalization and violent extremism; and to develop targeted and evidence-based responses, including empowering women to safeguard communities.

We also welcome the broad participation of civil society in the development, execution and monitoring of our NATO-Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. As a next step, we pledge to establish a civil society advisory panel to institutionalize that positive engagement.

The world is changing rapidly. We face a rising tide of violent extremism and terrorism. And it will be women, once again, who are most at risk. It is therefore essential that women be involved at every stage and every level of our operations and missions. Improving gender equality within NATO not only improves our credibility, it is essential to our ability to do our job right. Gender equality enhances our ability to respond and to deal with crises. Diversity gives us strength. Being inclusive will allow us to achieve our common goal: lasting peace and security.

I thank the Council for the opportunity to speak here today, and I extend special thanks to the President of the Government of Spain for his leadership in presiding over this very important meeting.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia.

Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia): I would like to begin by sincerely thanking Spain for organizing today's Security Council meeting. My thanks also go to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women, particularly for the global study, which is an excellent overview of the challenges of making the women and peace and security agenda a reality and the achievements won.

Slovenia supports the statements to be made later today by the observer of the European Union (EU) and by the representative Thailand, who will speak on behalf of the Human Security Network. Slovenia also joined in sponsoring resolution 2242 (2015), which I am certain will further mainstream gender in the peace and security agenda.

The anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) presents us with a unique opportunity to reflect upon our activities over the past 15 years and to renew our commitments. Slovenia has been active in promoting the women and peace and security agenda in various forums. We are a member of the informal group of friends of resolution 1325 (2000) within NATO and of the EU informal task force for its implementation. In 2014, Slovenia hosted the third seminar of the Initiative on Mediation in the Mediterranean, which addressed the role of women in mediation. In September, the Bled Strategic Forum discussed ending sexual violence in conflict. Most of Slovenia's activities on the women and peace and security agenda have been carried out as part of the implementation of the 2010-2015 national action plan for the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

The political representation of women in Slovenia is very good — 47 per cent of the Government and 34 per cent of the Parliament. Significant improvement was made in women's equal participation in the armed forces. The percentage of female members of Slovene armed forces is now approximately 15 per cent, which ranks Slovenia among the top countries in the world. I would like to highlight the following with regard to Slovenia's future commitments.

We will continue to promote the women and peace and security agenda in our activities in international and regional organizations and to strengthen cohesion among them. Slovenia will continue to raise this agenda item in the Human Rights Council, in particular when addressing country situations and within the scope of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism. We will promote the role of women in the international peace and security agenda and will strengthen efforts for their protection in conflict situations. That is also one of the goals of our new national programme on equal opportunities for women and men for the period 2015-2020.

Slovenia will continue to pay particular attention to training and education on women and peace and security in the military, police and judiciary. In 2016, we plan to develop a strategy on gender equality in international development cooperation, which will also take into consideration women and peace and security issues. We will also continue to give financial support to relevant projects carried out by the Slovenian non-governmental sector.

In conclusion, I concur with previous speakers that the women and peace and security agenda must be addressed comprehensively. I call upon all stakeholders to harmonize their activities in the implementation of this agenda of universal importance.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Community Development, Gender and Children of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Ms. Chana (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania welcomes Spain's leadership on the importance of the role of women in peace and security. We also commend Spain's Security Council presidency for its focus on the invaluable contribution women can bring to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of UN-Women, the President of the Executive Board of Solidarité féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral and the President of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq for their briefings.

Fifteen years ago the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), which provided a foundation on which the international community could establish greater engagement by women in the area of peace and security. Tanzania is pleased to note that progress has been made. The establishment of a normative framework on women and peace, the creation of UN-Women and the establishment of the Offices of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict are positive developments and have truly made a difference.

Obviously, there is much to be done in enabling the participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict political transition and in protecting, and countering the violation of, children. These gaps are largely attributed to the failure to collect sufficient resources, lagging political commitment and the absence of a strong accountability regime.

In advancing the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council, the United Nations system, regional organizations, Member States and civil society have important roles to play. In addition, various United Nations bodies and entities should tirelessly strive to discharge their respective mandates with a clear division of labour and in coordination. Likewise, Member States have the primary responsibility for protecting women's rights. In efforts to protect women's rights and strengthen their role in peace and security, the ownership of national Governments must be valued. The international community should also provide assistance to countries in need, while focusing on capacity-building.

Achieving women's development is the true foundation for realizing women's empowerment. At present, international development support and technical assistance is inadequate to meet the needs of women, especially in developing countries. It is in that regard that we call upon the international community to improve its support for issues of women and development. Capacity-building support to the countries concerned, as well as supporting women's and civil society organizations that play roles in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and national reconciliation, is crucial.

Advancing the participation of women in peace processes and in public life needs to be supported by strategic partnerships with national parliamentarians and with community and religious leaders. Such a partnership has worked for Tanzania, and we are committed to ensuring that women are represented at all decision-making levels and that their rights are protected and their security genuinely guaranteed. We believe that where women are fully represented, societies become more peaceful and stable. We also believe that where gender-based violence is eliminated and women are involved in conflict resolution, peace is more entrenched and sustainable.

Today Tanzania reaffirms its commitment to do the following. It will fully domesticate all women's rights treaties. It will develop a stand-alone act on violence against women. It will promote and support financing for the sustainable implementation of national and local authority plans to end violence against women and children and ensure harmonized protection at all levels. It will ensure that the principle of 50-50 representation of women and men — gender equality — in all key decision-making positions is achieved. It will continue its dedication to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Ms. Jones-Bos (Netherlands): I would first like to congratulate the Security Council on its adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), 15 years ago, and of resolution 2242 (2015), of which we are proud to be a sponsor, today. I would like to thank Prime Minister Rajoy Brey and the Spanish presidency of the Council for this chance to reaffirm the commitments we made 15 years ago to women and peace and security. I would also like to express our appreciation for the work of Radhika Coomaraswamy and her colleagues. They have produced an outstanding report (S/2015/716) that shows how right the Security Council was to adopt resolution 1325 (2000) in the first place. Wherever it has been implemented, the thinking behind it has proved correct.

The great value of the report I have just mentioned lies in the evidence gathered on the ground from men and women who face the bitter reality of conflict on a daily basis. And I salute the women who are here today and whom we heard this morning, some from countries such as Iraq, Libya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, the Sudan, South Sudan, Burundi and other conflict-affected countries. They are the true experts, and we look to them to shape our agenda. Like the partners who came to the Netherlands for our February conference, they shared their stories, best practices and contributions, often made at the risk of their own lives.

There is clear evidence that increasing political participation by women results in better negotiations, better and more sustainable agreements, better governance, more wealth, distributed more equitably, more and better conflict prevention and ultimately, therefore, more peace and security. The Kingdom of the Netherlands works with women's organizations on peace, justice and development, and empowering women and girls is crucial in all those areas. But huge challenges remain. Conflict is still rife, and we are confronted with ever more extreme violence. In such situations, women do badly. And when women do badly, the world suffers. Guns take over, and the result is violence, impunity and spiral of more poverty and conflict. One appalling example of that was the assassination of one of our partners, the Libyan lawyer Salwa Bugaighis, on 25 June 2014.

It is urgent that we break that spiral, and resolution 1325 (2000), we believe, contains the key to addressing these challenges. The thinking behind the resolution lies at the very heart of current Dutch policies on aid, trade, security and human rights, and it is paramount for our partnerships for peace, justice and development. Before the end of this year, we will issue our third national action plan, the product of a unique platform on which the Government has worked with more than 50 civil society organizations. We are providing €4 million a year to carry out the plan, supporting organizations on the ground that work to protect and politically empower women in conflict situations. We provide both diplomatic and financial support to Syrian women's efforts to present their views on their country's future in international forums. Women take centre stage in our vision of the future.

But over the next 15 years, the world's fate will be largely determined by whether or not women succeed in taking their rightful place in history. Do we want to achieve our global goals? Fight inequality? Create lasting peace? We need the women of the world to do that. Let us therefore all step up our support to organizations like Karama, a regional non-governmental organization based in Cairo that works throughout the Middle East in coalition with hundreds of partners to end violence against women.

Fifteen years ago, the Netherlands, as a member of the Security Council at the time, was one of the main advocates of resolution 1325 (2000). I was personally involved then and feel very strongly about it. Now we are aspiring to become a Security Council member again, partly in order to support increasing the pace of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its successor, resolution 2242 (2015). We think we have something to offer — the desire and the capacity to stand up and invest in women who are the drivers of change. It is time, as Elvis Presley put it in one of his many classic songs, for "A little less conversation, [and] a little more action".

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Ms. Pérez Colman (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Kingdom of Spain for its invitation to participate in this important open debate on women and peace and security on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

Argentina makes it a priority to incorporate a gender perspective into the design and implementation of its public policies. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, as well as the prevention and response to sexual violence in armed conflict, is embodied in Argentina's firm commitment to international instruments aimed at protecting women's human rights and to which it has accorded constitutional status, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Argentina's incorporation of women into peacekeeping processes and its process for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) is its response to a political decision to mainstream a gender perspective into public policies and to defend and promote women's human rights in every area. In that regard, in 2008 we established a national plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in the area of defence, and in 2012 we did the same vis-à-vis security. More recently, on 15 September, the President of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, approved a national plan of action for Argentina's implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent related resolutions that consolidates our various policies on the promotion and defence of women's human rights. The plan is aimed at increasing women's presence in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions and their participation in decision-making bodies. We intend to increase women's political participation in peace negotiations and conflict management and in the decision-making processes for those areas. We will incorporate a gender perspective in all activities of peacebuilding and humanitarian missions, notably activities for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We will also protect the human rights of women and girls in countries in conflict and emerging from conflict, including those in refugee camps and those who are displaced, particularly in dealing with gender-based and sexual violence, and promoting their safety and welfare.

Women in Argentina make up 16 per cent of the military component, and therefore one important recent milestone was the promotion of the first woman in our military to the rank of general. We have also promoted the presence of women in the army's infantry and cavalry, which were closed to women until 2012. The armed forces have created gender desks that work with the various military units and have strengthened gender focal points in order to conduct predeployment training of participants in peacekeeping operations.

Women are victims of various forms of violence in conflicts. Their impact on women and girls is varied, disproportionate, multidimensional and complex, with devastating effects both physically and on their fundamental rights. Argentina was a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 69/293, which declared 19 June the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, with the intention of raising awareness in order to tackle the use of this scourge as a weapon of war and to help promote a culture of peace that can ensure that we can put an end to this type of cruelty, which is a threat to the dignity of persons and to respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

We agree with the assessment in the concept note (S/2015/749, annex) prepared by the Kingdom of Spain on the need to ensure that United Nations senior management, both at Headquarters and in the field, acts with greater determination in effectively meeting its responsibilities in the area of women and peace and security, and we believe that we Member States should renew our commitment to integrate them into our national policies and laws.

Argentina has supported all of the resolutions aimed at combating sexual violence in conflict since resolution 1325 (2000) and its specific subsequent resolutions. My country's commitment to access to justice for women and the fight against impunity can be seen through its participation in the Justice Rapid Response mechanism since February 2009. Argentina is now one of the 10 members of the Executive Board of this mechanism and regularly participates in its meetings, providing its experience in investigating human rights violations.

Argentina believes in and supports the work of the international community to achieve zero tolerance for acts of sexual violence in conflicts. Impunity with regard to such acts produces a harmful effect because it exacerbates cycles of conflict. We must make the switch from a culture of impunity to a culture of prevention that promotes justice, responsibility and the rule of law. The role of the United Nations is crucial to support States in that process.

Argentina is committed specifically for 2016 to develop a proposal to establish a quota of 33 per cent for women at all grades and executive functions within the armed forces; to work jointly with the Auditor General of the Armed Forces to establish the post of Gender Auditor to take forward the process of handling disciplinary matters with a full gender perspective; and to go forward with the implementation of the Single Registry of Cases of Violence against Women in the proceedings of cases carried out by the armed forces.

The merit of resolution 1325 (2000) was to acknowledge the important role of women as protagonists in peace processes and in preventive diplomacy and their participation at the peace negotiating table and in the post-conflict reconstruction phase. We reaffirm Argentina's commitment to join efforts to ensure that this proactive approach is possible. We are convinced that we can achieve sustainable and lasting peace only with women participating at all levels of the peace process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union.

Ms. Diop: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, could not be with us today, but she congratulates Spain for its leadership on the women and peace and security agenda. She wishes the Council a successful high-level debate.

When resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, the African Union (AU) took this historic resolution as its own. Indeed, the Maputo Protocol stipulates in article 2 that all

> "State Parties shall combat all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative, institutional and other measures."

The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa requested the Heads of State and Government of Africa to meet to "ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace process", as stipulated in resolution 1325 (2000). It also calls for the appointment of women as special envoys and special representatives of the African Union.

Africa has indeed taken action with respect to the requirements of resolution 1325 (2000). Starting with the leadership of the institution, the African Union Commission, out of the 10 members of the Executive of the Commission, five are women. The Chairperson, Ms. Zuma, has continued to strengthen the participation of women by recently appointing women as Secretary-General of the Commission, Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff. Three more women have been appointed as Head and Deputy Head of Commission representation.

The African Union Peace and Security Department has put in place a gender, peace and security programme to assist member States and the regional economic communities in their women and peace and security agenda. We thank the partners — the United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria and Norway — that are supporting that programme. The African Union has embarked upon capacity-building by increasing the numbers through the training of women peace mediators, women election observers and gender advisers to be deployed in mediation processes and election observation.

The African Union has taken a strong stand on the issue of sexual abuse and exploitation. The Chairperson has clearly stated a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. In Somalia, the AU responded with the deployment of an investigation and assessment team following allegations against the African Union Mission in Somalia and the development of strong policy. The AU has deployed female peacekeepers and female police officers in peace support operations. Right now, African women in the military are fighting to defeat Al-Shabaab. In South Sudan, a commission of inquiry was mandated by member States, and gender-based violence was one of the focus areas to be investigated. Parties to the conflict have officially received the report, and now it has been agreed to establish a hybrid court to bring justice to the South Sudanese.

The African Union Commission — and here I would like to congratulate and applaud the efforts by UN-Women and its Executive Director, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, my sister — hosted a regional consultation so that African women could contribute to the global study. The global study has revealed that Africa has the highest number of women in political decision-making bodies and was the first region to appoint a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security. Indeed, countries such as Rwanda, Seychelles, Namibia, South Africa and Senegal are among the world champions when it comes to women's representation in Parliaments.

It remains clear that the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is slow, even though when we look at the regional economic communities we see that many of them have adopted a regional action plan. To date, 16 countries in Africa have developed a national action plan. Moreover, there is no systematic reporting on what the countries have achieved. We salute the effort of the global study, which has helped to review the achievements made by Africa's member States.

It is in that regard, as the Special Envoy, that I was given a mandate to ensure that the voices of women and the vulnerable were heard much more clearly in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In my capacity as Special Envoy, I visited various countries with the Executive Director of UN-Women. We both went to the Central African Republic. With the support of our partners, we went to South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria. I can say that women from different religious and ethnic groups and political parties are making peace in their communities. They need more of our support. In northern Nigeria, the Chibok girls who escaped have said that they want to continue their studies. They want to continue receiving support to complete their schooling.

Africa has decided to place women at the centre of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The 53 member States have declared 2015 the Year of Women's Empowerment, and 2016 the Year of Women's Human Rights. There is no doubt that the women's agenda is absolutely necessary to achieving peace and prosperity. We want to see more action in Africa. We need to see more accountability. We will achieve that through partnership with civil society organizations and women's groups.

In December 2014, we held a hearing with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union with women from Somalia, South Sudan and the Great Lakes region. At the end of the meeting, the Peace and Security Council mandated the Office of the Special Envoy to work on the continental framework to monitor the implementation by AU member States and other relevant stakeholders of the various instruments and other commitments. Again I thank UN-Women for supporting this process and my Office in the AU, and for ensuring that we have such a framework. I also express my appreciation to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its support of the women and peace and security agenda in Africa.

I would like to echo the voices of the African women in the field — the women who cannot wait, and to whom we need to listen. They say: no more declarations; only solemn action and solemn deliverables.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate and to commend the presidency's continued commitment to an issue of such importance to the international community.

It is my honour to be present here representing the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, and to offer Uruguay's vision on the challenges and the commitments ahead of us in this area.

We recognize the contribution of the international community, and especially of the United Nations system, but we must acknowledge that the full implementation of the objectives set out under resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions has not yet been achieved. Those resolutions show clearly that the prevention and resolution of conflicts requires the inclusion of women playing an active role in all efforts to achieve lasting peace.

There is clear evidence that women are the most reliable spokespersons for the needs of local communities. They are the ones most trusted in the gathering of evidence and the reporting of information on sexual violence. They are key to the development of local economies through small and medium-sized enterprises, and there are many other examples of their importance in the rebuilding of conflict zones. Despite that, UN-Women notes that of all the peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2010, a mere 15 per cent contained references to women.

It has been 15 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), and women head 19 per cent of United Nations field missions; they constitute 3 per cent of military personnel and 10 per cent of police personnel in peacekeeping operations. Our major concern in citing those numbers is to underline the opportunities and capabilities that have been squandered through the lack of an intensive focus on the inclusion of women in the conflict-resolution process. In that respect, we would like to highlight in particular the Secretary-General's commitment to allocating at least 15 per cent of the cost of peacekeeping operations to women's empowerment and gender equality programmes.

Uruguay is seriously committed to the women and peace and security agenda. It will continue contributing to the implementation of the agenda and will step up its efforts. First, we will maintain an above-average percentage of women deployed in peacekeeping missions. Currently, 9 per cent of the Uruguayan troops deployed in peacekeeping missions are female staff. Secondly, we will continue the mandatory predeployment training of troops who will be engaged in preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and sexual abuse. Thirdly, we will continue to rigorously apply the zero-tolerance policy in cases of misconduct, particularly with regard to cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.

We believe that specific commitments such as those I have just mentioned, along with measures such as expressly including the gender dimension in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, providing normative, substantive and technical support for UN-Women in the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and focusing on the relevant recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, are prerequisites for making substantive advances in implementing the agenda being discussed today.

Finally, I would like to state that, if elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Uruguay will continue the work of promoting the women and peace and security agenda, based on the conviction that resolution 1325 (2000) continues to be extremely relevant and remains a substantive reference point on the path towards the achievement of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Marinaki: I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. We would like to congratulate Spain on placing such strong emphasis on women and peace and security and the agenda in resolution 1325 (2000), and placing them centre stage in Security Council priorities. We also very much welcome the personal commitment of His Excellency Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy Brey by way of his presence here today.

In the same vein, we would like to commend the able stewardship of the presidency, together with the delegation of the United Kingdom, in steering resolution 2242 (2015) to its ultimate adoption, which was unanimous. All of us are very much committed to its implementation.

We also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment to the cause of women and peace and security, and we also pay special tribute to the exceptional work carried out by UN-Women and its Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, and her excellent team, with whom we have enjoyed a long and successful cooperation.

Lastly, we welcome the three women representatives of non-governmental organizations, who, by their candid and sobering recollections of the facts that they face on the ground, have put the problem into its proper perspective.

The European Union and its member States have a long-standing commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in both internal and external actions. As a security, development and political actor, the EU is heavily involved in supporting conflict prevention and peace processes and in dealing with the consequences of conflict. Women and peace and security issues are a vital element of our external policies, which range from the 17 civilian and military missions we currently deploy worldwide to our role as a foremost global provider of development aid and humanitarian assistance.

From terrorism to intensified refugee and migrant flows, it is vital that the symptoms and the root causes of all global challenges be tackled with firmness and fairness. With that in mind, it is all the more important that we understand and embrace the role of women in conflict resolution and prevention. Women need to be heard, as every step for women's rights and every victory on the status quo has been hard-won and, as Malala Yousafzai pointed out, we realize the importance of our voice only when we are silenced.

The European Union and the international community can undoubtedly do more to ensure that women's voices are heard and acted upon. The high-level review provides the opportunity to assess progress and enhance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. For that reason, the European Union has contributed actively to preparations for the global study. We welcome the work of Ms. Coomaraswamy and her team, as well as all the efforts reflected in Secretary-General's report (S/2015/716).

Therefore, the European Union will continue to ensure that it focuses on the promotion and protection of the human rights of women and their participation as positive agents of change, peace and development. We will make conflict-resolution and peacebuilding more effective through their protection, while also protecting women in situations of conflict and preventing them from becoming victims or perpetrators.

On top of its long-standing, active and continuous commitment, the European Union intends to do even more. We pledge to assume substantial financial commitments, to thoroughly mainstream gender and to include gender-specific actions in all European Union financial instruments, and to allocate more than €100 million over the next seven years to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment projects. In the context of our humanitarian assistance, we will tailor our targeted tools to assess how effectively all of the European Union's humanitarian actions integrate gender and age. Of course, we also will continue to prioritize our cooperation, first with UN-Women in the framework of our strategic partnership and under our memorandum of understanding. Secondly, we will continue to support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Bangura, and all of the relevant work aimed at formulating an integrated approach to preventing and punishing acts of sexual violence, as well as to bringing justice, services and reparations to the victims.

The European Union will also encourage the enhancement of the gender dimension through better ongoing synergies in the United Nations peace and security architecture, among the various ongoing United Nations reviews. We will continue to engage in close dialogue and actively support all forms of cooperation with civil society on issues concerning women in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to empower women's participation and leadership in peacebuilding initiatives. We will pay particular attention to the protection of women human rights defenders, especially in situations of conflict.

We remain strongly convinced that coordination among all United Nations Member States with international and regional organizations is key to the effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We also believe in holding ourselves to the highest possible standards. Therefore, the European Union pledges to improve the way it measures the impact of all of its actions in order to enhance its accountability. In that context, we will update our indicators for a comprehensive approach to the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) to measure more effectively the impact of our action. Moreover, we are in the process of completing a baseline study to measure how we have integrated gender into the European Union's crisis management missions and operations.

We must address issues related to women, peace and security in emerging challenges. The European Union will actively coordinate its policies on women, peace and security and on preventing and countering violent extremism in all of its forms. We condemn all forms of violence and abuses that women and girls — as well as men and boys — have been suffering at the hands of terrorist groups and regimes in conflict zones, especially when terrorist groups fight their battles on the bodies of women and girls. We need to promote the positive role that women can play in countering terrorism and violent extremism in their families, communities and societies.

Promoting gender equality is also a priority for the European Union internally, and we are committed to leading by example to improve the gender balance in decision-making positions in our own institutions, including through a better representation of qualified female candidates in middle- and senior-management positions and as heads of European Union delegations abroad.

At the same time, last month the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy created the post of Principal Adviser on gender and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security to mark the European Union's engagement with international, regional and national actors on policies and actions relating to gender and the women and peace and security agenda. I have the honour to have been appointed to that post, and my commitment is to enhancing the visibility and effective prioritization of gender, as well as women, peace and security, in all of the European Union's external actions, and to assisting the work of the United Nations, in close consultation with all United Nations services and agencies.

Lastly, I would like to conclude by expressing the European Union's expectation of an ambitious outcome of the high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000) and an even faster and more ambitious implementation of resolution 2242 (2015), which we adopted today.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Fathalla (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend my thanks to our friend, Spain, for presiding over the Security Council for the month of October. I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate to review and assess the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. It comes at a time when Arab countries are undergoing major transformations in which women have been victimized, which represents a threat to the progress that they had achieved in the Arab region.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Tunisia on the occasion of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet. I commend the women of Tunisia, who have offered us a shining example of resistance and played an active role in the evolution and democratic transformation of their country.

Having witnessed the exceptional circumstances in the region and based on our concern over the situation and our belief in the importance of eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against women, the League of Arab States has taken steps to diversify our actions. We have undertaken regional strategies to reinforce community action to eliminate violence directed against women, while conforming to all international resolutions, in particular resolution 1325 (2000), advocating the protection and empowerment of women in peace and war.

In 2011, the League of Arab States launched an Arab strategy for combating violence against women, aimed at enhancing the participation of Arab women at all political levels and their participation in education, public-awareness training and building a culture of peace. The League of Arab States has always sought to enhance the participation of civil society organizations that address the development of women in general in order to promote and support efforts made within the framework of the collective actions of the League of Arab States to raise awareness of issues concerning women.

The League's 144th ministerial meeting, held in September, adopted a regional strategy and executive plan of action to protect Arab women and peace and security. That represents an important step to strengthen the awareness of officials and all other stakeholders with respect to all international and regional resolutions related to the issue of women and peace and security. The strategy and the executive plan of action are based on the participation, protection and empowerment of women. The executive plan of action on the protection of Arab women's security and peace is the fruit of open dialogue between the League's Department of Women, Family and Childhood and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, which met yesterday. We believe that it is very important to shed light on the repercussions on women and girls in the Arab countries of war and armed conflict, which also lead to emigration. We therefore need to improve the mechanisms for the exchange of dialogue and experiences in that regard.

The League of Arab States intends to hold a regional conference in December regarding the executive plan of action. I would like, in that context, to refer to the Cairo Declaration concerning the post-2015 Arab women's agenda. On 23 February 2014, the Arab countries reiterated their commitment to participating in the march towards the increased participation of women in political parties, trade unions and all elected councils, as well as in civil society organizations, with opportunities equal to those of men. We also have taken all necessary measures to protect women from violence and to use the media to raise awareness of women's human rights and society's duty to protect them. To that end, the Department of Information and Communications of the League of Arab States cooperated with the regional office of the United Nations Development Programme in holding a high-level meeting at United Nations headquarters on 14 October on the issue of gender and conflict hot spots.

We believe that we must overcome all obstacles facing people living under foreign occupation, in particular marginalized groups. In that regard, I stress the rights of the Palestinian people, who require immediate protection. Arab women in the occupied territories endure many different kinds of suffering — psychological, social, economic, legal and political — as a result of the practices of the Israeli occupation, the violation of their human rights, the deteriorating economic situation, the blockade, the restrictions to their movement and, of course, poverty. Last Sunday, Rahaf Hassan, who was only 4-years old, and her mother were killed by an Israeli aeroplane and their house was destroyed. On Wednesday, a Palestinian girl on her way to prayer was shot in the head by an Israeli soldier.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Organization of American States.

Mr. Laínez: Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Organization of American States (OAS) and its Inter-American

Commission of Women, for the opportunity to address this historic celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) — a watershed moment for the women of the world in terms of how they are affected by, and participate in, all types of conflict and crisis.

The Americas are passing through an age of democratic consolidation that has been marked, on the one hand, by moments of progress, broader levels of participation in politics and decision-making, relatively stable levels of economic growth and unprecedented levels of connectivity and access to information. On the other hand, those changes have also been accompanied by growing levels of income inequality, persistent corruption, growing dissatisfaction with the quality of representative democracy and, above all, rising levels of crime and violence.

Security has a central role to play in the success of our new democracies. While the Americas do not have any countries that are formally defined as being in conflict, our region is plagued by high levels of citizen insecurity, a reality that is regularly cited in public opinion surveys as one of the main concerns of our citizens. We face many of the issues that also confront countries in conflict, including weak rule of law, security institutions that are incapable of or unwilling to respect human rights, the proliferation of small arms and high levels of all types of violence, including violence against women, particularly the gender-based killing of women, known in our region as femicide.

Although the lack of citizen security is a problem affecting the entire population, women experience violence, robbery, trafficking and other security issues differently from men as a result of their differential relationship to public spaces. In addition, as a number of authors have pointed out, public debates on security issues and public policies and programmes that attempt to address those issues are often based on indicators that reduce violence to criminal activities, which usually excludes the violence against women, which is most often exercised within the home.

In this forum, the OAS commits to undertaking advocacy efforts to promote the relevance of resolution 1325 (2000), in addition to the other resolutions on women and peace and security, particularly those that address sexual violence in times of conflict and crisis. Our own Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women provides a strong legal framework to support the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and the Follow-Up Mechanism to the Convention has placed particular emphasis on violence against women perpetrated by the State or people acting on behalf of the State.

Failure to consider the security situation of women, on the one hand, and their absence from structures where decisions are made and action taken in the area of security, on the other, is tantamount to the security policy in most of the region's countries ignoring more than 50 per cent of the population. Incorporating differentiating criteria for analysing existing threats strengthens the ability of the security sector to provide appropriate responses according to the rights and priorities of each population group.

To that end, the OAS offers its full cooperation to help incorporate women's rights and gender equality into regional and international security policies and programmes, in particular with regard to strengthening civilian oversight of the security sector and effectively addressing and preventing violence against women.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ms. Beham: I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for allowing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to participate once again in this important debate and to share our experiences in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It is my special pleasure to be here today on behalf of the OSCE Secretary General. Let me also express my appreciation and congratulate you, Sir, and the Security Council on the adoption of another seminal resolution on women and peace and security. I wish also to thank previous speakers and in particular the briefers for their interesting and inspiring presentations.

The fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) is a very appropriate occasion for us all to reflect on how we can make our world more peaceful and just by creating security that is fully inclusive.

The OSCE is the largest regional security organization in the world dealing with early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. We have a holistic approach to security that includes politico-military issues and economic and environmental security, as well as human rights and the rule of law. Gender equality as a cross-cutting issue is one of the cornerstones of our comprehensive and cooperative security concept, and therefore the women and peace and security agenda plays a central role in our work.

There are a number of key OSCE policy documents that explicitly refer to resolution 1325 (2000). Looking back at the 15 years of implementation of the resolution, we can clearly see that progress has been made. For example, 27 of the 54 existing national action plans on resolution 1325 (2000) are from the OSCE region, and several more are in the making. A number of OSCE participating States apply the provisions of the resolution without having a national action plan.

In practical terms, our network of 59 gender focal points throughout OSCE executive structures assists staff in gender-mainstreaming their work, involving women in all of our projects and actions, and incorporating gender analysis in our work on the conflict cycle. We also have developed tools and instruments for this purpose, and we undertook a study on the 27 national action plans to get a deeper understanding of where we stand with the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in the OSCE region.

The results of the study were largely consistent with the conclusions of the regional consultations we held with UN-Women and the Lithuanian Government in Vilnius in April this year to feed into the global study on resolution 1325 (2000). Drawing from these findings, we will focus our priority attention on, inter alia, the following issues.

First, we deliver training to our staff, senior management and special representatives on gender-inclusive mediation and other conflict-prevention measures. Early warning, confidence-building, dialogue facilitation, preventive diplomacy and mediation are still predominantly male-dominated areas.

Second, we assist participating States in improving existing national action plans and other strategies or developing new ones, with a focus on creating coherence between domestic and outward-looking implementation activities.

Third, as we believe that preventing sexual and gender-based violence in conflict starts with combating violence against women and domestic violence in peacetime, we have strengthened our activities in this area and, inter alia, promote the ratification of the Istanbul Convention as a key international document and tool.

Fourth, we need more quality information and data to inform policies and systematic responses and to learn more about the impact of the work we are doing on women and peace and security. We need more research and intend to cooperate more closely with academia.

Fifth, we are working on strengthening the interchange between international organizations, States and civil society. We must not forget the important role that civil society has played from the very beginning in pushing for the women and peace and security agenda as well as its vital role in the implementation of national action plans and providing much-needed monitoring and oversight.

Sixth, over the past years the OSCE has sought to highlight the role of women and gender issues in the context of countering terrorist radicalization. The Global Counterterrorism Forum, at its Ministerial Conference on 27 September 2015, adopted a document on good practices on women and countering violent extremism, which was drafted and developed by the OSCE in cooperation with the Forum.

Seventh, we empower women through establishing mentoring networks and have started to partner with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to boost women's empowerment in the area of peace and security in order to create a critical mass of trained women in the OSCE region to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

The OSCE remains fully committed to comprehensive and inclusive peace and security. It is for this reason that Secretary General Lamberto Zannier is organizing an OSCE Security Day on 13 November 2015 to discuss ways to further advance the women and peace and security agenda. This will be a good opportunity to identify how the conclusions of this high-level review and the global study can be operationalized in the framework of the OSCE.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Executive Director of UN-Women to respond to questions raised.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka: I wish once again to express our great appreciation to Spain for having convened this very rich and informative dialogue. I also wish to express my gratitude for the contribution of the United Kingdom, which also made it possible for resolution 2242 (2015) to be adopted unanimously. We thank members profusely for that achievement. We also thank the individual Member States that have presented their efforts and initiatives to us here and who were not shy about highlighting many of the problems they face, while emphasizing the fact that a paradigm shift is needed and that, as the representative of the Netherlands said, there should be more action and less talk.

We want to emphasize, with respect to regional organizations, whose presence is highly appreciated, that in resolution 2242 (2015) the role of regional organizations is mentioned at least seven times, further pointing out the important role of such organizations. Mass displacements caused by conflict frequently spill across borders and have prompted an increase in the need for regional approaches to the prevention of conflict and to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We therefore welcome the collaboration within the United Nations that we have experienced with regional and subregional organizations, including the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), NATO and the Pacific Island Forum and such subregional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). I hope that this greater collaboration will strengthen our joint efforts in relation to the women and peace and security agenda and the recommendations that have come out of the global study.

The adoption of regional policies and action plans on women and peace and security by ECOWAS, the EU, IGAD, NATO and the Pacific Islands Forum have a knock-on effect in encouraging an even greater number of national action plans, which improves the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also see that the knock-on effect means that countries can depend on each other for support.

We have seen that regional plans are effectively implemented when there is widespread consultation with civil society, when there is political will, when there are adequate financial, human and technical resources and when there is a strong framework for monitoring and evaluation. We are also encouraged by the appointment of high-level envoys, some of whom were mentioned today by speakers from various countries and regions, and we welcome the appointment of women envoys within NATO and the AU, whose collaboration we are already fully enjoying. We also welcome the appointment of senior agenda advisers by the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and others, and we encourage that trend.

The global study tells us that it can have a positive impact when we appoint envoys who are able to assist in driving the implementation of regional plans. Both the NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and the AU Special Envoy played a key role in facilitating regional consultations for the global study. We thank NATO, the EU, the AU and OSCE for their support in organizing such regional consultations.

We look forward to our ongoing work in partnership with the EU. And we look forward to our discussion as we pursue our three-year review and as we work to ensure that our way forward on the women and peace and security agenda will assist us in taking collective actions that will have an impact in all areas that we all feel strongly about.

I also want to highlight the importance of appointing mediators. Many countries are already doing that, appointing and supporting networks of core women mediators, whose numbers are increasing, and the participation of women in tackling conflicts and in peacemaking is increasing.

I would like to conclude by highlighting the fact that today, as we continue this discussion, has to be seen as a day of a paradigm shift. There was a time before the 15-year study and there will be a time after the 15-year study. That means that we are changing gears in the manner in which we are doing our work, and we support the work of the women and peace and security agenda. We need strong, decisive, united action in order to make sure that 16 years after the adoption of the resolution, 17 years after the adoption of the resolution, but long before we have reached 30 years after the adoption of the resolution, we will be able to talk about having achieved a great impact in the implementation of the resolution and the active participation of both men and women in peacemaking and in conflict prevention.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Ms. Martelli (Italy) (*spoke in Italian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): First of all, on behalf of Italy, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, for the Security Council's adoption today of resolution 2242 (2015), on women and peace and security, whose contents we fully support. We thank Spain and the United Kingdom for the work carried out to that end.

In that regard, I cannot help but point out that even in the political crises that precede armed conflict and where there are violations of fundamental human rights, there is a difference between the impacts on men and on women. Studies of the phases directly preceding the outbreak of armed conflict show a consistent stereotyping of the roles of men and women, with a consequential increase in violence against women.

In the acute phase of a conflict, sexual violence against women and girls becomes a weapon of war used on a large scale, and even within the home domestic violence increases. The phenomenon of sexual violence tends to increase even in post-conflict situations. It is therefore fundamental that women should participate in peace negotiations so as to ensure appropriate involvement in the stages following the signing of the peace agreements. Even more important is the consideration of gender issues in the negotiations so that the presence of women is not completely irrelevant. Maintaining a gender perspective is crucial while negotiating guarantees during the rebuilding phase, and a new definition of security as the human and social condition based on the exercise of one's fundamental human rights, which are the main instruments for maintaining peace, is emerging.

Heeding the call of Prime Minister Rajoy Brey of Spain on the need to further encourage cooperation in that field, and building upon the remarks by Chilean Vice-Minister Gloria Maira, I wish to underscore the key importance of dialogue with civil society. In that regard, Italy, within its national action plan for fighting violence against women, will be establishing, this Friday, a space for structured partnerships devoted to fighting violence against women. The peace that we were referring to previously is clearly achieved by valuing people and through the development of informed capital as the first step in a process leading to the gaining of substantial freedoms.

Not just for Italy but for all mature democracies, the real challenge is investing in a new way of managing our knowledge, driven by innovation. In that regard, a true inversion of the trends means relaunching services to people and providing health care that is capable of responding to today's needs. I am referring to an ageing population and the changing structure of the family, which is becoming more blended and smaller owing to lower birth rates.

The great migrations from the global South call for cross-cutting public policies, that is, a transnational approach, because only by considering the elimination of vulnerabilities and poverty from a global perspective, including in developing countries, that we can activate our capabilities for promoting human rights on a global scale.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), which re-launches cooperation as an instrument for creating partnerships for development, must serve as a constant reference in the peacebuilding process. Its objectives seek to eliminate extreme poverty globally by 2030, halve the percentage of women and men and children who go hungry, create political assets at the national, regional and international levels so as to maintain greater investments in the fight against poverty, eliminate all forms of malnutrition, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women and family farmers, through secure access to land and agricultural resources, reduce the global maternal mortality rate to fewer than 70 cases per 1,000 live births, drastically reduce infant mortality, and eliminate endemic diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Other objectives of the Agenda are to acknowledge the need for inclusive and equal education for all, full gender equality, universal access to sustainable energy, support for infrastructure, the promotion of sustainable consumption and production models and the adoption of urgent measures to fight climate change and desertification.

The global South is the true key to maintaining balance in the world. Our investment in women for the comprehensive consolidation of security is the true measure of our ability to unite history and innovation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Ms. Rodríguez Pineda (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We congratulate Spain on this successful meeting on the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). We welcome the new global study on women and peace and security, which was drafted by Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy and her team. We also thank Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, for her efforts.

Properly implementing resolution 1325 (2000) requires unwavering political will on the part of all relevant Government agencies. That will is demonstrated by clearly defined budgetary allocations both in our national budgets and in the contributions made by the international community. Governments and civil society must work together and complement each other's efforts.

Women play a crucial role in conflict prevention and resolution, the promotion of justice, the promotion of reconciliation and the rebuilding of national institutions — all essential pillars for the consolidation of lasting peace. The involvement of women in decision-making processes at all levels is important.

Broad-based sustainable development can contribute to addressing the underlying causes of conflict. By definition, such development requires that women be included. We therefore welcome the inclusion of Goal 5, on the empowerment of women and girls, in the sustainable development agenda.

We reiterate that the prevention of, and protection against, gender-based violence and sexual abuse requires the involvement of men and boys. It concerns everybody.

We strongly condemn the reported cases of sexual violence, which continues to be used as a strategy for intimidation and terror. Furthermore, we condemn the incidents of violence and sexual abuse in peacekeeping operations. We demand the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy.

Security forces must recognize that women play a vital role in the national reconciliation dialogue. Those forces must ensure their safety and integrity as an important aspect of the peace and security equation.

We will not rest until we see that the special needs of women and girls in the field are receiving the attention they deserve. That will be achieved with the active involvement of all the various agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and Member States, and with the support of regional organizations and civil society, in particular women's organizations.

We recognize the important work undertaken by UN-Women in advancing the gender perspective in all activities of United Nations field missions. We urge that office to continue to provide their valuable contributions to our efforts to meet the challenges now facing us.

We reiterate that the review of the peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes should include the commitments relating to the women and peace and security agenda. We need to improve the existing cooperation and establish synergies between peacekeeping operations and country teams. That is the only way we can exploit the mutual comparative advantages of both.

We must improve access to justice and strengthen the participation of women in the drafting of national legislation. Through joint and coordinated efforts, we can achieve peaceful and inclusive societies for all. In that regard, we would like to emphasize the complementarity of the women and peace and security agenda with the mandate of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its review of the national reports submitted by States parties.

The Rome Statute constitutes the most progressive international legal framework on gender-based crimes to date. It should be incorporated into the national context so that States have a comprehensive framework for investigating international crimes of sexual violence and gender-based crimes, with specific procedures to support victims and witnesses, and with programmes to teach women the laws concerning them. Each of those components has a significant effect on women's access to justice.

In conclusion, we support resolution 2242 (2015), which was adopted today and which we sponsored. We urge all the members present to take advantage of this important opportunity to move forward towards a stronger and more substantial commitment to gender equality and to ensure that the empowerment of women and girls is one of the cornerstones of peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): I wish to thank Spain and commend your vision and leadership, Mr. President, in organizing today's high-level debate on the review of resolution 1325 (2000).

Hungary strongly supported the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and the subsequent resolutions on that topic. We know that numerous initiatives and actions have been launched during the past 15 years aimed at enhancing the effective participation of women in peace processes, as well as their empowerment in peacemaking and post-conflict situations.

Hungary fully allies itself with the common pledges on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security delivered by the observer of the European Union.

In addition, at the national level, Hungary pledges to identify and deploy female military experts, officers and police officers to United Nations peacekeeping and European Union Common Security and Defence Policy missions.

We also commit ourselves to stepping up all efforts aimed at strengthening justice and accountability. In that context, we support the inclusion of the perpetrators of gross violations of women's human rights and other forms of gender-based crimes in United Nations and bilateral sanctions.

We are ready to contribute to international initiatives aimed at combating sexual violence in conflicts, particularly against women and girls.

Hungary financed, on a bilateral basis, a gender-based training workshop in Kenya aimed at developing the security sector within the framework of our international development cooperation strategy. We have also supported UN-Women programmes, one in the Western Balkans on advancing the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and one in Kenya for improving security and enhancing leadership for crisis-affected women and girls. Hungary also contributed to the construction of a secondary school for girls in Afghanistan.

However, despite the remarkable progress we have made in the past 15 years, there still remain significant challenges hindering our efforts to achieve peace and security for all. Hungary is greatly looking forward to working with UN-Women and Member States on the various United Nations programmes, because we believe that responsibility for dealing with those issues lies with all of us, without exception.

Hungary declared its commitment to the cause of preventing sexual violence at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict held in London last year, where Hungary joined others in endorsing the communiqué on the Call to Action to End Violence against Women and Girls in Emergencies. Finally, I would like to add that, in cooperation with Hungarian Baptist Aid, a renowned organization that has accumulated vast experience in cooperating with military peacekeeping forces in fighting sexual violence and dealing with the consequences of such vicious acts, Hungary also continues to contribute to a project aimed at educating women and girls in Baghlan province in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Mukerji (India): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on this important and pertinent issue and for the informative concept note (S/2015/749, annex). In order to give other colleagues a chance to speak today, I will make only a few points and request that my full statement be circulated.

The Secretary-General's annual report (S/2015/716) is being considered at a historic moment, when we have just adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) and commemorated both the fortieth anniversary of the historic first World Conference on Women of the United Nations, held in Mexico City, and the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. If we are to sustain solutions to conflict situations, we must synergize the agenda relating to women and peace and security with the relevant Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

If the Security Council cannot reflect that perspective in its deliberations while drawing up mandates for peace operations, we will not succeed in achieving the desired synergy. Developing countries must have a greater presence in the permanent membership of the Council, which is why the Council's existing structure is in urgent need of reform, as was agreed on by all our leaders at the 2005 World Summit.

The United Nations must encourage women's full and meaningful participation and leadership in the decision-making processes of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. In that context, our pioneering role in Liberia, where India became the first United Nations State Member to send an all-female peacekeeping unit, illustrates what we are calling for.

National Governments must be encouraged and assisted in developing and implementing national strategies in the context of resolution 1325 (2000). The key to national capacity-building is not the temporary deployment of external humanitarian experts, but the actual process of transferring experiences in human-resource development and building national institutions by Member States that are willing and able to share their experiences. The recent commitment we made at the leaders' summit on United Nations peacekeeping to ramping up our contribution of enablers and skilled personnel from our armed forces, especially our police, is an illustration of how India proposes to address the issue. It goes without saying that such assistance must be consented to by the host Government, so that the United Nations can actually contribute to the objectives of peacebuilding. It is logical for us to point out here that such an approach, based on our experience as a troop-contributing country, requires the Council to implement, in letter and spirit, the provisions of Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations, which allow troop-contributing countries, like us, that are not represented on the Council to sit face to face with Council members when it is drawing up mandates for United Nations peace operations.

In conclusion, we believe that any diversion from that objective towards other thematic issues, including human rights, violent extremism and countering terrorism, will endanger and dilute the work being done separately in the General Assembly and the Council, and will put undue strain on the already stretched resources of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your efforts on this issue, and the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their briefings this morning. I would also particularly like to thank Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Mohammed and Ms. Murabit for their participation here today. The bravery and commitment of women's organizations in preventing conflict, building peace and promoting human rights, often in very dangerous situations, is admirable and deserves our full support.

We are here today not only to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the ground-breaking resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, but also to support and promote women as actors for peace. It is high time that we accelerated our common efforts and moved from normative commitments to full implementation.

Enhancing gender equality and women's contributions to peace and security are top priorities for the Swedish Government. Promoting gender equality means promoting not only the economic, political and social empowerment of women but also development and conflict prevention. I would like to highlight three areas that are particularly important to us and to which Sweden wants to pledge its continued support.

First, indisputable evidence, as the global study highlights, has shown that women's participation leads to more sustainable peace. Yet women's experience, knowledge and expertise are too often excluded from peace processes. Change therefore needs to start, and it needs to start at home. My Government has committed to strengthening women's human rights, improving their access to resources and increasing their representation, in times of war and in times of peace.

Our revised national action plan will make women's participation in peace and security a top priority. In order to make sure that the new plan duly reflects the needs and experiences of women and girls in conflict-affected societies, we have held consultations in five countries dealing with or emerging from conflict. All of the women, ranging from those in Afghanistan to those in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, conveyed the same, very clear message, which is that no sustainable peace can be achieved without them. We must hear their plea and commit to continuing to support and fund women's organizations in conflict and post-conflict countries. We have increased that support threefold over the past five years, but we will strive to do even more. Sweden is also developing a network of women peace mediators, and we have also participated in the creation of a Nordic women's mediation network with a capacity to assist peace efforts wherever they may be needed in the world.

Secondly, we should acknowledge that sexual violence in conflict is a core security challenge that must remain on the Security Council's agenda and particularly now, when the use of sexual violence has been taken to new and horrific levels in which sexual violence is not only condoned but openly prescribed as a method of warfare. There must be accountability for such crimes and an end to impunity. As a major donor to the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, we will seek further ways to increase support to the victims and survivors of sexual violence. We will continue to cooperate with relevant stakeholders, such as the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in order to create stronger national capacities for investigating and prosecuting sexual and gender-based crimes.

In 2016, we will assume the leadership of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies initiative, which aims to foster accountability and mitigate gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. Our main objective for next year will be to take the initiative from policy to action and from words to deeds. We want to work with all our partners in the initiative, and with everyone here in the Council, to make a real and positive impact on how we address gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. Sweden will also support organizations working to engage men and boys in pursuing gender equality. Recent good practices from conflict-affected countries have shown the importance of engaging men and boys in the prevention of gender-based violence.

Thirdly, a lack of resources, or their uneven distribution, is often at the core of inequality. We need a thorough analysis of how resources are allocated, and to whom. If we are to achieve real change, political commitment must be accompanied by sustainable financing. We are committed to allocating 1 per cent of our gross domestic income to development cooperation. Gender equality and women's rights and empowerment will remain top priorities in our development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Gender equality was the primary focus of 16 per cent of our development support to conflict-affected countries in 2014. We challenge the United Nations to reach its set target of 15 per cent gender funding within all aid flows to conflict-affected countries.

We welcome resolution 2242 (2015), adopted today by the Council, and its call on the United Nations to redouble efforts to integrate women's needs and the gender perspective. By strengthening gender competence and accountability at strategic, tactical and operational levels, the United Nations will be better fit to cater to the needs of women and men, boys and girls.

We are committed to supporting those efforts and will continue to offer predeployment training on resolution 1325 (2000) and gender to peacekeeping mission staff, as well as seconding gender advisers to international institutions and missions. We also remain committed to a strong and adequately resourced UN-Women. We were the programme's top donor in 2014, with a total support of $35 million.

In conclusion, in order to take our common commitment seriously, we need to ensure that women's voices are being heard and that the needs and realities of women living in conflict and post-conflict countries influence our decisions. It is time for a paradigm shift. Sustainable development and peace and security can never be achieved if half the population is excluded.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Prime Minister Rajoy Brey and the delegation of Spain for convening today's debate and for their commitment to the women and peace and security agenda.

(*spoke in English*)

I also thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women and Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Ms. Yanar Mohammed and Ms. Alaa Murabit for their briefings.

I congratulate the authors of global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That ambitious and comprehensive document will provide a sound and updated basis for the discussions among policymakers, activists and scholars during the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. Along with the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and those of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, we now have a solid triad of reports to underpin our deliberations on the review of the policies and practices of the Organization concerning international peace and security.

Fifteen years have passed since the Security Council first recognized that women and girls experienced armed conflict in particularly dramatic ways, and therefore had specific needs, concerns and perspectives. That led to the essential acknowledgement that sustainable peace could only be achieved if both female and male perspectives were fully taken into account. Over the past few years, the women and peace and security agenda has been integrated into the political mainstream of the United Nations. A comprehensive legal framework has been created through eight specific Council resolutions, including resolution 2242 (2015), adopted today, and a number of presidential statements.

Other United Nations entities, including UN-Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Commission on the Status of Women — which I currently have the honour to chair — have also contributed in that regard. At the next session of the Commission, the priority theme will be "Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development", whereas the review theme will be "The elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls". Likewise, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and several rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council have diligently worked to strengthen this vital agenda. The International Criminal Court and other domestic and international tribunals have produced a substantial body of jurisprudence regarding violations against women and girls. It would now be unthinkable to create a major new peacekeeping operation without deploying gender advisers, without including the protection of women in the mandate and without training peacekeepers to prevent sexual abuse.

Much has changed since the days before resolution 1325 (2000), yet much continues unchanged. Women and girls are still subject to unacceptable violations of their rights in war zones around the world. Impunity for gender-based crimes remains a major challenge. Peacekeeping, as well as peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts, could still benefit from greater female participation and leadership. Today's debate is therefore a timely opportunity to take stock and think ahead.

Brazil fully agrees with the global study's assessment that the most effective way to avoid violence against women in conflict is to prevent war from erupting in the first place. This high-level review should encourage us to renew our commitment to diplomatic instruments for the peaceful resolution of disputes, including good offices, mediation and the involvement of regional organizations. It is therefore of fundamental importance to increase the participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict transitions, as emphasized by the concept note prepared by the delegation of Spain (S/2015/749, annex). Our initiatives to prevent and resolve conflict should also tackle the root causes and structural drivers of violence, including social, economic and political exclusion and inequality, which affect women and girls disproportionately.

The complex humanitarian crises arising from conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa should serve to highlight the plight of women and girls who have been subject to many forms of sexual violence, including rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage, and who are also forced to abandon their homes and communities, becoming refugees and internally displaced persons. In that context, we should ensure particular attention to women and girls who belong to vulnerable groups, including indigenous women and older women, those with disabilities and members of ethnic or religious minorities, among others.

Brazil has long stated that supporting and hosting refugees is a moral imperative and a common duty of humankind. We have lately renewed our guidelines aimed at facilitating visas on a humanitarian basis for individuals affected by the conflict in Syria. Nearly 8,000 asylum-seekers, including thousands of vulnerable women and girls, have been issued such visas in the past four years.

During the recent global leaders meeting on gender equality, President Dilma Rousseff underscored that women were not only beneficiaries of public policies and initiatives, but also agents of their own future. Brazil sees protection and empowerment as inseparable aspects of the women and peace and security agenda. Women and girls are not just entitled to safety, but also to an active and influential voice. No decision concerning women should be adopted without consultation and consideration of their unique perspective.

At the international level that includes formulating and implementing the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, conducting peace negotiations and addressing peacebuilding, recovery and humanitarian activities. At the domestic level, Governments should be ready to design and improve their gender-sensitive policies.

Brazil has made considerable progress in the past decade. We enacted the Maria da Penha law, which recognizes domestic violence as a violation of human rights, and more recently created the House of Brazilian Women, a multidisciplinary space aimed at facilitating women's access to specialized services, protection and empowerment and ensuring their economic autonomy. Those initiatives were recently crowned by the establishment of the Ministry for Women, Racial Equality and Human Rights. We are confident that our national efforts will positively influence all our activities in the international arena.

In that vein, I am pleased to announce today that the Government of Brazil has launched the drafting process of a national action plan on women and peace and security. Our plan will include measures in areas such as fostering the participation of women in peace missions, further enhancing the relationship between troops and civilians, particularly women and girls in peace operations, and providing humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation to post-conflict countries concerning gender issues. The initiative will complement the provisions of our national policy plan on women, which already embraces the recommendations set out in resolution 1325 (2000), including strict legislation against sexual and gender-based violence.

Seventy years ago, Mr. Bertha Lutz, a distinguished member of the Brazilian delegation to the San Francisco Conference, was one of the few women to sign the Charter of the United Nations. At that time, a significant achievement was the recognition of the equality between men and women and the right of women to participate in all the activities of the United Nations.

To conclude, let me reiterate that Brazil will remain strongly engaged in the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment issues at all levels and areas of work at the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I thank the presidency of Spain and previous speakers for focusing attention on ways to strengthen the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), following its 15-year review and as we work towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While many noteworthy strides have been achieved since 2000, it is necessary to bridge the gap between intent and implementation. My delegation would therefore like to propose some key measures.

First, the women and peace and security agenda requires still closer coordination among the appropriate Special Representatives of the Secretary-General who deal with violence and the United Nations system and agencies, notably the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and its operations on the ground, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with UN-Women serving as the lead agency. Member States and troop-contributing countries should provide predeployment gender-sensitivity training, and regional organizations, civil society and other stakeholders should also be integral to the collective effort.

Secondly, all comprehensive, multidimensional and hybrid peacekeeping operations should have a strong women and peace and security mandate, with gender specialists to provide capacity-building in the military, police and civilian sectors, as well as in units that focus on the rule of law, transitional justice and human rights. Peacekeeping operations must strive for gender mainstreaming, just as at Headquarters. My delegation fully endorses the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy, which must be strictly enforced without any impunity. Member States should support that initiative with expertise and funding, so that the impact of resolution 1325 (2000) can be durable and wide-reaching, especially in fragile and insecure societies.

In that regard, Kazakh peacekeepers receive intensive training on the issue of women and peace and security. My country currently chairs the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Gender Unit and is in the process of developing a national action plan based on resolution 1325 (2000). As Chair of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia and of the OSCE, and as former Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation from 2011 to 2012 and of the Collective Security Treaty Organization from 2010 to 2012, we supported Governments in the region and beyond in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, recovery processes, and humanitarian assistance, in which women were fully engaged as equal partners, not victims.

Resolution 1325 (2000) can serve as a compass for Member States in peacetime, too. My country sees a close nexus between peace and development. As the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, emphasized in his address in the general debate at the General Assembly at its seventieth session (see A/70/PV.13):

> "Humankind needs to move from a focus on routine conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation to a new development strategy that would make such conflicts senseless." (*A/70/PV.13*)

He proposed that the United Nations formulate a global development strategy 2045 as a vision for the

United Nations centenary. He also proposed that the global focus on international law and on joint counter-terrorism activities be strengthened to ensure better protection for civilians, including women and girls. Another initiative would involve the earmarking of 1 per cent of the military or defence budgets of Member States for the purposes of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including the very theme that we are discussing this morning.

Our national Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, announced in December 2012, provides for the full participation of women in every aspect of national life. In our national legislation, key instruments support women and peace and security with the aim of maintaining gender equality and ensuring freedom from gender-based violence.

Kazakhstan believes it is vitally important for the Security Council to remain committed to making the protection of women and girls a high priority. My country pledges to be a strong voice on their behalf.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Ms. Kanchanalak (Thailand): It is an honour for Thailand to speak, as the current Chair of the Human Security Network, on behalf of Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Switzerland, Slovenia, South Africa as an observer, and my own country, Thailand. I would like to thank Spain for organizing this important debate and all speakers for their valuable input into today's deliberations.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the world has experienced a rapid increase in conflicts, violent extremism and humanitarian crises whose effects have fallen heavily on women and children. The involvement of women continues all too often to lag behind that of men in peace and security issues, particularly in political and decision-making processes, and women are also the target of sexual and gender-based violence. Women have a great stake in peace processes and conflict prevention, since they still suffer the most painful wounds in any given conflict, whether or not they were participants in the conflict itself. The positive role of women in the processes of conflict prevention and resolution is often ignored rather than utilized.

As a group of countries promoting human security, the Human Security Network would like to emphasize that women's security is essential for human security. The Network welcomes the Secretary-General's request for a global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and will carefully study its findings and recommendations. The Network calls upon Member States, United Nations entities and regional and subregional organizations to support Member States in their efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). The Network also calls for greater efforts to promote, protect and respect the human rights of women and girls and to strengthen efforts to address gender-based violence through a people-centred approach. Specifically, that can be done by ensuring and implementing strategies that protect women's integrity, by promoting women's representation at all decision-making levels and through mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

Effective measures and immediate actions should be taken to end impunity and to prosecute and punish those responsible for the violation of human rights, especially for crimes against women and girls in conflict. We find it crucial to include a gender-responsive approach and to strengthen efforts aimed at providing life-saving and non-discriminatory response services. Civil society, including grass-roots women's organizations and networks, play an important role in providing assistance to the victims and survivors of sexual violence.

The empowerment and participation of women is essential to any conflict prevention and protection response. As such, strategies for the effective integration of a gender perspective should be pursued, so as to promote women's empowerment and participation. The importance of women's participation in peace processes as well as in peacekeeping operations was underlined in resolution 1325 (2000). We call for greater recognition and support for their participation during all stages of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation processes, so that peace agreements can be reached and will be more likely to last.

In my national capacity, allow me briefly to impress upon the Council a few important points.

Much too often, we focus on the view of women and girls as victims of violence. In fact, however, they are also effective agents of change who contribute to peace processes at all stages, including to rebuilding their societies after conflict. That is already evident, but imagine if they were supported to do more. Imagine if they were given more opportunities to participate in processes that have a direct impact upon them. As Member States, we can help to give them that opportunity. Member States can do more to help women and girls make a real difference by promoting women's participation in peace processes in concrete terms. That also means investing in women's capacity to lead, mediate and play a pivotal role in peace and security.

In the past few months, Thai Government agencies have undertaken the rigorous process of drafting a national action plan on women and peace and security. A draft of that plan is currently undergoing a public-hearing process. We have conducted one large public hearing in the capital, and a few more will be conducted in the provinces, so as to ensure that our national action plan is relevant and beneficial and gains local support and awareness, and that it will be effective. We hope that, in just a few months' time, this draft will be able to undergo the final approval process and will be duly launched.

Another area that we feel requires immediate attention is data collection and building a body of evidence to keep the international community abreast and thereby strengthen their good efforts in promoting the role of women in peace and security globally.

Lastly, I would also like to associate Thailand's statement with the statement of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be delivered by Viet Nam.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mrs. Kassangana-Jakubowska (Poland) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Spanish presidency for having organized this timely debate to mark the fifteenth anniversary of and the global review on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

My delegation aligns itself with the declaration made by the observer of the the European Union. I take this the opportunity to make some observations from our national perspective.

(*spoke in English*)

Fifteen years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we now have sufficient momentum to confirm our determination to implement our national commitments with regard to the women and peace and security agenda. We would therefore like to thank Spain and the United Kingdom for preparing resolution 2242 (2015), which was just adopted and which Poland proudly co-sponsored.

We fully understand that there can be no durable and sustainable post-conflict recovery without meaningful reconciliation and without the restoration of true confidence in justice. In particular, there can be no peace and security without addressing the consequences of violence against women, and no long-term stability and prosperity without providing justice and ensuring that such crimes are not repeated. Poland is committed to ending impunity. We will continue to support the work of the International Criminal Court, both by sharing our expertise and by contributing financially to the Court's Trust Fund for Victims.

Poland attaches the utmost importance to the practical involvement of women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. One of the ways to engage them in decision-making is by strengthening their participation in the legal system. Accordingly, we support the candidature of Ms. Agnieszka Klonowiecka-Milart to a judgeship position on the United Nations Dispute Tribunal based in Nairobi. With her 17 years of experience within the United Nations as an international judge for the United Nations on the Supreme Court of Kosovo and the Supreme Court Chamber in Cambodia for the Khmer Rouge trials, as well as an expert in legal reform in Bosnia, Afghanistan and Kosovo, she will, we believe, set a good example for other women aspiring to make a difference in conflict and post-conflict areas.

(*spoke in French*)

Poland supports the candidature of a woman for the office of the next Secretary-General. We are convinced that that would contribute to bolstering the participation of women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping, as well as the advancement of women at all levels of decision-making.

(*spoke in English*)

From 2011 to 2013, Poland trained professional experts in the field of gender equality to advise the commanders of Polish contingents abroad. Since then, they have supported the Polish commanders in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Poland will also take measures to combat the under-representation of women within national civilian contingents for peacekeeping operations, with a view to increasing their number and to ensuring that higher positions as well are filled by women candidates.

Last but not least, we recognize the indispensable role of women's participation and empowerment as a key component of lasting peace and sustainable development. As the lessons from Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea Bissau have taught us, sustainable peace and security can be achieved only through the full participation of all sectors of society, in which the contribution of women is fundamental.

We would also like to stress that combating sexual violence against women in armed conflicts remains an important issue for the Polish Government. We welcomed the anti-sexual-violence initiative of the British Government as a timely and necessary initiative aimed at addressing the culture of impunity. As a member of the UN-Women Executive Board, Poland stands ready to cooperate further in that regard.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that Poland has decided to earmark a minimum of 15 per cent of all our future funding for the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund to be dedicated to women's specific needs, and in particular to advancing gender equality in post-conflict situations. Already this year, in partnership with UN-Women, we have initiated a project involving the innovative employment of Ukrainian internally displaced women with children. That pilot project will continue to grow in the coming years.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): I would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement. I also appreciate the briefings by Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, and the non-governmental organization representatives.

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the first and historic resolution to recognize the role of gender equality and women's leadership in international peace and security. Japan, as a peace-loving nation, has consistently supported conflict resolution and peacebuilding and maintains the perspective of gender equality in its basic principles of official development assistance.

Two years ago, the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe, showed our country's firm determination to realize "a society in which women shine" (*A/68/PV.12, p. 34*) by announcing the contribution of over $3 billion to developing countries over the following three years. The women and peace and security agenda is one of the pillars for realizing that commitment. Japan has been steadily implementing that pledge and will achieve the goal announced by Prime Minister Abe before the end of this year.

Japan finalized its national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) last month. It has ambitiously set itself 150 goals, which will be regularly monitored. One of the unique features of the plan is its inclusion and emphasis on gender mainstreaming during all phases of natural disaster risk-reduction and response. Today, Japan has the honour to promise to fulfil those commitments.

The world has changed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The nature of conflicts has changed accordingly. Today, I would like to point out three challenges surrounding the women and peace and security agenda and demonstrate Japan's commitment to addressing those issues.

First, violent extremism has emerged as a new challenge. Women are its primary victims. At the same time, they can, by succumbing to the influence of extremism, become perpetrators. Addressing the root causes of violent extremism is critical. But how do we do that?

As the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/716) and the global study point out, the economic empowerment and participation of women play a key role in resolving conflicts effectively, sustaining peace, and preventing violent extremism from happening in the first place. Let me offer an example. In cooperation with UN-Women, Japan has been supporting the refugees and internally displaced persons in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon through vocational training and cash-for-work programmes. We believe that women's engagement in peace and security, along with their empowerment and protection, will serve as a bulwark against the spread of extremist ideologies. From that standpoint, Japan continues to respond to the current refugee crisis and will furnish approximately $810 million in assistance this year to refugees and internally displaced persons from Syria and Iraq.

Securing project implementation is our second key challenge. In order to sustain project implementation, it is essential to broaden the donor base, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and individuals. In that context, Japan supports the aims of the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action.

Thirdly, we must not tolerate impunity for security-related personnel who perpetrate acts of violence against women. In countries experiencing conflict situations, it is urgent to engage the national military forces, police and judiciary sectors with the women and peace and security agenda. Capacity enhancement for those sectors is key. The international community should mobilize every possible means for supporting that objective. Japan will increase its assistance to the office of Ms. Zainab Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, which is making tremendous efforts in that regard.

Japan welcomes the increasing momentum of the women and peace and security agenda. Today's adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) under the strong leadership of the Spanish presidency marks a historical step. We also welcome the completion of the global study. Continued effort is needed, however, on the part of all actors of the international community to implement its recommendations. Japan is one of the co-chairs of the group of friends of the global study. Japan will take over the role of chair of the Group of Seven next year. Through those roles, Japan will vigorously push forward the women and peace and security agenda during the coming year and beyond. Now is the time for us all to move forward.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): We thank the Spanish presidency of the Council for convening today's important debate on women and peace and security.

The briefings of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and representatives of civil society have all been instructive and very valuable.

Resolution 1325 (2000) changed the approach to dealing with women in situations of armed conflict. The Security Council's engagement with women and peace and security over the past 15 years has led to the creation of a robust normative framework for the protection and empowerment of women in conflict situations. Subsequent Council resolutions have provided additional safeguards to protect women from sexual violence, guarantee their participation in peace processes and protect their rights.

Despite those commendable achievements, the situation on the ground remains troubling, if not alarming. Raging conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa and violent acts by extremist groups continue to place women and girls in great peril and underline their intense vulnerability in those conflict situations. At a time when the refugee crisis has acquired disturbing dimensions, a large proportion of those fleeing conflict zones happen to be women. Torn from their communities and homes, those refugee women are not only deeply traumatized, but also face serious threats to their physical health and indeed to their personal safety and security.

Pakistan believes that it is the collective responsibility of the United Nations and the entire international community to provide much-needed humanitarian assistance to those refugee women and to ensure their safety and security in camp settings and in transit to safer destinations. Here, I must underline the crucial importance of conflict prevention and conflict resolution to the women and peace and security agenda. The hardships faced by displaced women and girls and the grave crimes committed against them are mostly a direct consequence of conflict situations. The Council, we feel, should adopt a hands-on, strategic approach to conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Multidimensional peacekeeping missions, such as those provided for in resolution 2086 (2013), play a key role in combating violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. As a leading troop contributor, Pakistan will continue to ensure that our troops respond to the special needs of women and girls. We plan to further streamline training on gender sensitization. Pakistani women have served on the front lines as police officers, doctors and nurses in various missions in Asia, Africa and the Balkans. We are proud of the fact that a Pakistani police officer, Shahzadi Gulfam, was the recipient of the International Female Police Peacekeeper Award.

Pakistan's adherence to the ideals of empowering women and protecting their rights stems from our faith, our Constitution and the vision of our founding fathers, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who famously said: "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless women are side by side with men". It was my country that earned the distinction of electing the first female Prime Minister in the entire Muslim world. We therefore support Security Council efforts to pursue its women and peace and security agenda in accordance with its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

However, the Council's focus should be on the prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict and strengthening women's participation in peace processes. The inclusion of peripheral issues that fall under the purview of other United Nations organs will only serve to weaken the wide consensus around the role of the Council in the women and peace and security domain.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on the successful adoption today of resolution 2242 (2015). Given this unprecedented debate, I will not read out our whole statement, but will simply highlight the six most important points. If I get anything wrong, I would ask listeners not quote me but refer to the written statement, which is available.

Our first point is that the main challenge to the women and peace and security agenda is implementation. We need to move away from a silo approach and to more strongly tackle the root causes of the lack of implementation of the agenda, which concerns gender-based discrimination more broadly, irrespective of conflict. A study suggests that rising levels of violence against women are in fact indicators of impending conflict, before the conflict starts. We therefore need a broader approach in tackling the root causes.

Secondly, we believe that the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (General Assembly resolution 70/1), will be an important tool to improve implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Sustainable Development Goal 5, on gender equality, and Goal 16, on peaceful societies, establish a long-overdue link between the work of the Council and our development efforts.

Thirdly, we would like to emphasize that the World Humanitarian Summit next year will also provide an important opportunity to promote this agenda, especially since we know that including women also enhances humanitarian work.

Fourthly, participation is an important pillar of this agenda. But we believe that to achieve the meaningful participation of women, we need to really change attitudes, harmful stereotypes and the violent ideas of men that persist in many parts of the world, and education is the only way to change that.

Our fifth point is that we also need to tackle the culture of impunity. We believe that the International Criminal Court (ICC) has an important role to play in this regard, especially since sexual violence plays a role in nearly every case before the ICC. We would also like to emphasize that collecting evidence in a professional manner at the earliest possible stage is crucial for successful prosecutions, and we support the Justice Rapid Response initiative in that regard.

Our sixth and final point is that sufficient funding is required. For Liechtenstein, women's human rights and empowerment are high priorities in our budget for international cooperation, and we hope that other countries, especially major donors, will continue to take the same approach.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to congratulate the Kingdom of Spain on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month and to wish it every success in carrying out its duties. I should like also to thank the Russian Federation for its outstanding presidency of the Council last month.

I wish to express my gratitude for the opportunity provided us to deliver a statement on this important issue, especially given the difficulties facing women in general and Iraqi women in particular in the face of the escalating waves of terrorism that our country sweeping through our country.

I congratulate Spain on the work it did in connection with the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) this morning. The constitutional and legal empowerment of women will not lead to any fruitful results unless we condemn all fatwas that permit the enslavement and forced marriage of women and girls, the terrorist attacks that we have been witnessing, and the acts of aggression committed in Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). There have been innumerable attacks against civilians of all factions, all of which has undermined the peaceful coexistence, sustainability and stability that have characterized Iraqi society for decades.

The strengthening of the rule of law is essential to the economic empowerment of women and their participation in decision-making processes. Iraq has established four courts on domestic violence and family affairs. Concerning the legal framework for women's empowerment, the Iraqi Constitution has given Iraqi women married to non-Iraqis the right to Iraqi citizenship for their children, on the basis of article 18 bis of the Constitution. Women also have the right to participate in decision-making mechanisms and in fact constitute one fourth of the members of the Iraqi Parliament.

I take this opportunity to urge the international community to liberate the women captured by ISIL, who are daily subjected to systematic sexual violence. I also call on States and the relevant international organizations to provide medical and psychological treatment for sexually abused women, to rehabilitate them psychologically and socially, and to provide them with the education necessary to ensure their integration into society, so that they can reassume their important role in society and contribute to its rebuilding.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Reindel (Germany): Owing to time constraints, I will deliver only a condensed version of my statement. The full text will be available online.

Let me congratulate Spain on its assumption of the presidency of the Council. We express our gratitude to you, Sir, for having convened this debate and for putting the women and peace and security agenda at the centre of your presidency. I would also like to commend the Executive Director of UN-Women for her excellent briefing and the two civil-society briefers for their insightful testimonies.

Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) one and a half decades ago was a milestone, and we have made great strides since then. Today, it would be inconceivable for a major Security Council-mandated mission not to include a gender component. More than 50 countries, including Germany, have adopted national action plans for the implementation of the resolution.

Yet we still witness gross human rights violations, including, and particularly, against women, in crisis-ridden regions across the Middle East and elsewhere. And we are faced with millions of refugees fleeing their homes; an estimated 800,000 will have sought refuge in Germany by the end of 2015.

Against that backdrop, one finding of the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716) is especially significant: the prevention of conflicts and the women and peace and security agenda are directly linked. That is why Germany will continue to push for the political empowerment of women and provide adequate capacity-building and incentives. A case in point is our long-standing effort to facilitate the inclusion of women in the peace dialogues in Colombia and in the Philippines.

We all know that international peace and observation missions are expected to be standard-setters. Germany will thus continue to deploy female police and military experts, including specialized teams for gender-based violence. During our chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2016, we will appoint a Special Representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office on Gender Issues.

Germany is fully committed to ensuring that the women and peace and security agenda has the necessary financial underpinning. To that end, we will this year once again contribute €1 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross for use in preventing sexual violence in armed conflict and in assisting its victims.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bangura has been tireless in drawing our attention to the horrific sexual crimes being carried out in conflicts around the world. We encourage the members of the Council to resort to her expertise more frequently.

It is deplorable that the survivors of sexual violence frequently face stigmatization upon returning to their families and communities. We commend the Yazidi spiritual leadership in Iraq for defying this paradigm. The positive message of acceptance and integration is a model to be followed the world over.

In the spirit of our national action plan, we are weaving the women and peace and security agenda into our response to the higher number of refugees arriving in Germany. We are investing in services that take into account the specific needs of refugee women and girls, in particular those who have lived through the horrors of sexual violence.

In the 15 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we have together achieved significant progress in expanding and promoting the women and peace and security agenda. Now that the normative framework is largely in place, we need to make further rapid strides towards its implementation. Germany will remain a strong partner in this endeavour.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Today we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of a resolution whose legacy has been of incredible richness. Resolution 1325 (2000) was the response of the Security Council to a decade of unprecedented violations and violence against women. But resolution 1325 (2000) was also the starting point of many developments both normative and operational. This dual orientation is at the heart of resolution 1325 (2000): it aims not only at protecting women in times of conflict, but also at enabling them to fulfil their role as agents of change. We welcome the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) and the presentation to be made tomorrow on the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which Luxembourg financially supported.

Luxembourg fully supports the statement of the European Union and will contribute to the implementation of the European commitments made at this meeting.

During its recent term on the Security Council, Luxembourg made the women and peace and security agenda one of its priorities. I would like to reiterate our commitment to the cause of women in times of conflict and in times of peace. The importance of role of women in the development of their countries is no longer in doubt. Luxembourg is also pursuing a strategy of taking into account the conditions, priorities and needs of women as part of our official development assistance, which amounts to 1 per cent of our gross national income.

We are convinced of the value of the contribution of women in peacebuilding efforts. Since 2010, Luxembourg has supported a project of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations designed to strengthen the role of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, in close consultation with national authorities and civil society organizations. In this regard, I would like to thank the women's organizations of civil society for their commitment, without which it would not be possible to make progress on the women and peace and security agenda.

We support the partnership between Justice Rapid Response, UN-Women and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations, which allows experts to be deployed to investigate and provide assistance to victims. We also support the team of experts on the rule of law and issues related to sexual violence in times of conflict with a view to strengthening the capacity of national stakeholders in the rule of law and justice. Indeed, the fight against impunity is essential: there can be no peace without the restoration of justice. In this regard, I would like to reiterate the full support of my country for the International Criminal Court, which, since its creation, has strengthened the fight against impunity.

Luxembourg is and will remain a strong and reliable partner of UN-Women, to which it is one of the top 20 contributors. In addition, we will maintain our high level of financial contribution in the area of gender mainstreaming in the budgets of United Nations agencies.

Each State and each international or regional organization has a role to play in advancing the role of women in the interest of peace and security. But the Security Council must also fulfil the role it has taken on in adopting this historic resolution 15 years ago. It must show political will and courage. We hope that the new resolution, of which Luxembourg is one of the sponsors, can contribute to that outcome, in particular through the creation of the informal group of experts that will assist the Council to integrate more systematically the questions of women and peace and security in its work. The call to action we are launching today can succeed only if we are all willing to hear the appeal and if everyone is ready to act.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia): I welcome the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), of which Estonia was a sponsor. I align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was a game-changer for women and peace and security. I want to thank you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General for organizing today's debate to underline the importance of the issue.

The year 2015 has given the international community an unparalleled opportunity to reiterate the importance of the implementation of women's and girls' rights. We are celebrating today 15 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and, recently, 20 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. In addition newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 70/1) encourage us to take a look at how women are affected by each of the 17 Goals.

The parallel review of resolution 1325 (2000) and United Nations peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding efforts has led to an invaluable opportunity to create a more holistic approach to conflict prevention. Paired with more focused attention on the role of women in society as well as in peace and security, the international community has a unique opportunity to effectively address the challenges the agenda faces.

Much has changed in the world during past 15 years. The number of conflicts has increased significantly, and we face new threats. One of the key challenges we face is the implementation gap. The Security Council should strengthen its own commitment to the effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. However, it is the primary responsibility of each Member State to make sure that women are included from the very beginning in conflict prevention, peace operations planning and conflict resolution.

Estonia is committed to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and is currently in the process of adopting its second national action plan. Changes do not happen overnight. We therefore have to focus on raising awareness on the women and peace and security agenda from the grass-roots level to that of international cooperation. We strongly support the inclusion of the gender perspective in the mandates of the operations and missions, and their implementation and evaluation, in the international organizations of which we are members. In parallel, we must continue to fight against impunity, especially against sexual violence in conflicts.

Estonia continues to support the rights of women and girls within the framework of development cooperation, with special attention being paid to women's access to education and health care. Empowered educated women are more likely to be active in local communities and participate in peace processes and conflict prevention. This year provides us with a unique opportunity to give an additional impetus to realizing our previously set goals — let us not lose the momentum.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Romania.

Mr. Jinga (Romania): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this high-level open debate of the Security Council, celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his report (S/2015/716) and the members of the high-level advisory group for their work on the comprehensive global study on preventing conflict, transforming justice and securing peace, to which Romania contributed. We also greatly appreciate the briefers' insightful presentations earlier today.

Romania aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union. I would now like to make a few comments from our national perspective.

Resolution 1325 (2000) put a greatly needed emphasis on the importance of the role of women in peace processes. Today we have heard about the progress that has been made in the past 15 years and about the remaining challenges and priorities for action. Romania believes that all actors — Member States, regional organizations, civil society and the media — should continue to work to implement the agenda on women and peace and security. The active participation of women in peace processes has proved vital to making conflict resolution and peacebuilding more effective.

The first female officer in Romania's armed forces was Lieutenant Ecaterina Teodoroiu, who died heroically in the First World War. In 1973, Romanian women began entering the military as a profession. More recently, our Ministry of Defence adopted an action plan aimed at implementing the Security Council's seven resolutions on women, peace and security. Based on our Constitution's provisions, it promotes fair and balanced access for men and women, military and civilians, to senior-level and executive positions. As a result, we have women who have reached the rank of general and, beginning in 2009, we have seen an increasing number of female military staff participating in international missions. Furthermore, women from our Ministry of Internal Affairs have been deployed in peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions of the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Today I am privileged to be able to acknowledge the contribution to our support for peace and stabilization in Haiti of a Romanian officer, Chief Superintendent Raluca Domuta, currently Commander for the southern region of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, who was proclaimed International Female Police Peacekeeper for 2015. Throughout her deployment in Haiti, she has used her national expertise to combat trafficking in human beings and organized crime, and she is an excellent example of the value added by the gender component in United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions.

The issues of gender equality, tolerance, non-discrimination and the prohibition of sexual harassment and gender-based violence are reflected in all of Romania's military educational programmes. We have deployed mixed-gender teams, especially within the civil and military cooperation units that have been mainly responsible for engaging with the population in Afghanistan, while female engagement teams have been assigned to engage with Afghan women and girls in order to help empower them in their own societies, for example in Zabul province. There, through a multitude of projects and programmes, Romania's military staff have acted to support disadvantaged women and vulnerable groups within their area of operations. The activities were performed in full cooperation with representatives of the host country and the local population, and with regional and civil society organizations.

Today, military operations are conducted in a complex security environment that requires the complementary skills and expertise of both women and men, since war and conflict have different impacts on both of them. However, whether in peace or war, we cannot change perspectives on women's issues without the proactive participation of men. The UN-Women "He For She" campaign encourages men to actively support women and girls. President Klaus Iohannis of Romania has participated personally in this movement, and his concrete commitments show how men in power can also empower the women of their countries.

Romania is a sponsor of resolution 2242 (2015) on women and peace and security, adopted by consensus this morning, and we therefore join the call for more determined action on the part of all stakeholders in advancing the agenda on women and peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Ružička (Slovakia): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on this open debate and on the interest you have generated by bringing the subject to the Council. I would like to welcome today's adoption of resolution 2242 (2000) on women and peace and security, of which Slovakia is a proud sponsor. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-NMgcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Yanar Mohammed, President of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Head of Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral, and Ms. Alaa Murabit, of Voice of Libyan Women, for their briefings. I would particularly like to highlight the personal involvement of the Secretary-General and UN-Women, represented here by Assistant Secretary-General Lakshmi Puri, in promoting this very important topic on the United Nations agenda.

I align my remarks with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union, and would also like to share some of my thoughts in my national capacity.

Fifteen years ago, through its resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council acknowledged the fact that women were not playing a large enough role in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. It is indeed symbolic that the fifteenth anniversary of the resolution's adoption coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Goal 5 of our recently launched new development agenda, "Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (General Assembly resolution 70/1), explicitly addresses the need to achieve gender equality and to engage and empower all women and girls in our efforts to make our life and our planet sustainable for future generations. The targets under Goal 5 provide an appropriate balance of protection and support for women, with three aimed at protecting women and girls by ending harmful practices and the rest aimed at encouraging women's ability to enter the public sphere in meaningful ways.

I would like to emphasize three words here: role, ability and power. The role of women in peace and security is indispensable. The ability of women to influence negotiations increases the likelihood that peace agreements will be reached. The power of women has a positive effect on the durability of peace and influences other actors, including young people. Resolution 1325 (2000) has been followed by six others addressing the importance of women's participation and leadership. Yet we must admit that women are still underrepresented in the area of security. The current share of female negotiators is 9 per cent. Only 4 per cent of the military components in United Nations missions are women, and only 54 countries have formulated national action plans on women and peace and security.

Since 2000, we have made significant progress in many areas. But we still have much work to do. I would like to mention just a few areas that we should give more attention to. They include supporting women's participation in all peace and security processes including, among other things, all justice and mediation components; strengthening our efforts to increase women's engagement and advancement throughout the security sector, particularly in the areas of security sector reform and emphasizing conflict prevention; engaging women in key political and decision-making processes, upholding the rule of law and implementing non-discriminatory laws, policies and practices. We should also support new regional and national action plans on women and peace and security and review existing ones by, among other things, establishing inter-agency coordination systems. And we should make a dedicated effort to advance the inclusion of women in endeavours to counter violent extremism, including engagement in preventive and educational activities for youth.

The global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2010) recommends that the women and peace and security agenda ought to be included in every aspect of the United Nations work and that overall women's participation ought to be strengthened. Therefore, we must encourage women to move into the public sphere. The goal — our mission — will be accomplished only when resolution 1325 (2000) represents the past, and the equal participation of women and men in all public spheres of life will encompass the present and future.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Ms. Frankinet (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate and for the opportunity afforded to Belgium to take part. My delegation awould also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and the representatives of civil society for their briefings.

Belgium welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2242 (2015), which it was pleased to have sponsored.

I fully align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union, and would like to make the following comments in my national capacity.

From its inception, Belgium has strongly supported the women and peace and security agenda. Currently, all the relevant Belgian stakeholders are focusing their efforts on implementing the second national action plan on women and peace and security. That detailed plan, which spans 2013-2016, focuses on six priority goals, including the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence, including sexual violence, and the participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. The plan includes areas of action and follow-up instruments for each of those six goals.

Given that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the three target countries of Belgium's national action plan, my delegation would like to thank Ms. Julienne Lusenge for her briefing on the situation in that country. Belgium actively supports the participation of women in that country and contributes to the implementation of the €2 million UN-Women project there that supports the rights and participation of Congolese women in the framework of resolution 1325 (2000).

A global study demonstrates that genuine participation by women increases the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, the credibility and quality of peacekeeping operations, the speediness of economic recovery in post-conflict situations and the sustainability of peace agreements. It is therefore disappointing to note that the same study reveals that, 15 years later, the participation of women in peace processes and in post-conflict political transitions remains a significant challenge.

The peace and security situation is different today as compared to 15 years ago, as the testimony of Ms. Mohammed this morning illustrated. The persistent cycles of conflicts and of fragile situations, among other things, have been exacerbated by new weapons technologies and new threats, such as the rise in violent extremism, which has spread easily thanks to the new information technologies. Women and girls have a key role to play because they can constitute one of the most effective voices in combating violent extremism — as mothers, sisters and wives, but also in the many other roles they have in the society that they live in. We must support them and provide them with the requisite tools to help them defend the values of tolerance and respect for others.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the fact that Belgium is committed to continue to implement its national plan and to give political and operational priority to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Medan (Croatia): At the outset, allow me to thank the Spanish presidency of the Security Council for convening this high-level debate on women and peace and security. We also welcome the adoption of the new resolution 2242 (2015), on women and peace and security, earlier this morning, which we were also glad to sponsor.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union earlier, and I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

We welcome the high-level review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as an invaluable occasion to reflect on the current status of the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, and to make concrete commitments to its full realization. Croatia can attest from its own experience to the devastating effects of war on women and girls, and attaches particular importance to their protection and empowerment. Although we know that women are more likely to suffer in times of conflict, by no means does that imply that they should be reduced to being victims only. Indeed, women are powerful agents of peace and security, and their political participation is a path towards development, as well as for good governance and democracy. That is why we need more women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as in the maintenance of a sustainable and inclusive peace.

Despite the development of policies, action plans, guidelines, programmes and training in the 15 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), women continue to face significant barriers to successfully participating and playing roles in those processes. The number of women participating in decision-making in the peace and security spheres worldwide remains unacceptably low, while grave abuses and violence against women, including sexual violence and rape, continue to be devastating. The rise of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism only further aggravates the atrocities and human rights violations women and girls are subjected to. Therefore, the protection of women in armed conflict, parallel to the enhancement of their contribution to peace processes and in rebuilding their communities, still remains a crucial challenge.

Our focus must now be directed at bridging the gaps between the global, regional and national policies related to the women and peace and security agenda and the realities of the situation on the ground. First and foremost, more needs to be done at the national level. The implementation of the resolution has to be country-driven, and Member States need to take responsibility for its success by ensuring that it is integrated into national policies.

I am pleased to say that Croatia has taken steps to integrate the gender perspective into its national foreign and security policy, into its national policy for the promotion of gender equality and its first national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Croatia is currently developing its second national plan, which is expected to be adopted by 2016. The new plan will cover both our domestic and international activities by setting out and strengthening specific measures in the prevention and protection spheres, and with regard to female representation in decision-making activities and processes related to security and peacebuilding.

In that context, with a view to further advancing the women and peace and security agenda, Croatia commits to further promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the context of its foreign, security and defence policies at all levels. We also commit to nominate women for top-level positions in international and regional peace and security organizations. Similarly, we intend to focus specifically on the gender dimension of Croatia's involvement in peacekeeping missions and operations abroad and to actively promote the participation of female officers and military experts. We will also attach specific importance on gender-related elements in predeployment training for civilian and military personnel, including prevention and response to sexual violence and on a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

We will take measures to tackle the underrepresentation of women in political decision-making in order to achieve more balanced participation by women and men in Croatian political bodies and institutions at all levels. We commit to increase the number of female heads of Croatia's diplomatic representations. We will accord high priority to the visibility of gender and women and peace and security-related policy and action at national and local levels, as well as ensure coordination among the relevant national actors.

We will also support the broad participation of civil society and women's organizations in all activities related to the women and peace and security agenda. We will promote the women and peace and security agenda within other international organizations and initiatives, in particular within the Equal Futures Partnership during Croatia's chairmanship in 2016. And we commit to providing development and humanitarian assistance with an integrated gender perspective.

Let me conclude by underlining that what we have heard today is a common understanding that the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) should be viewed as much more than just a stocktaking opportunity; it is first and foremost a vision-making one. We have to work tirelessly so that our joint vision expressed today translates into a reality that unleashes the potential of each and every woman to achieve a world free of conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to thank the Prime Minister of Spain, Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, for presiding over our meeting this morning. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their briefings. We warmly welcome the adoption this morning of resolution 2242 (2015), of which we were a sponsor.

Over the past two years, there has been an increase in violence against women in the context of conflicts. Such massive violations of human rights are carried out by terrorist organizations and authoritarian regimes. There have been cases of forced marriage and sexual slavery, which deprive women of their right to a life of dignity. When addressing this issue, we must first and foremost put in place mechanisms to protect women and ensure that the existing international instruments to protect women in times of conflict are in fact implemented.

It is of great concern that the parties responsible for such violations of human rights are not prosecuted and brought to justice. It is therefore important that the Security Council use all the means available to ensure that they face international criminal justice. Such crimes must not go unpunished. In that connection, we would like to commend the efforts being made by Justice Rapid Response with regard to sexual and gender-based violence. That organization provides important support to the international community. We have contributed to its efforts by deploying experts in criminal law and by hosting meetings of the group.

We have undertaken various initiatives to allow women to play their full role in all areas of life. That includes efforts to ensure that we prevent conflicts, extremism, violence and terrorism. Along with Italy, Thailand and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, we have also addressed this issue in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, whose adoption included the participation of many countries, organizations and experts. We have also organized a high-level group to take up the issue of combating extremism, in cooperation with the Permanent Missions of Saudi Arabia and Jordan and including the participation of the United Nations and Columbia University. Those are significant contributions to ongoing discussions with regard to combating extremism and radical thinking.

Finally, we reiterate our commitment to ensuring gender equality and protecting human rights. We will continue to support any initiative to that end, as well as all initiatives that take into account the humanitarian aspect and the rule of law.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cyprus.

Mr. Menelaou (Cyprus): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on organizing this open debate. I shall read out a shortened version of our statement and submit the full text for the record.

Cyprus aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and would like to add the following comments in its national capacity.

Resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up resolutions have beeen instrumental in promoting the women and peace and security agenda in Cyprus.

They have served as leverage for reform through the increased involvement of women in the peace process and by increasing the number of women working in the foreign service and serving in senior decision-making positions in the public and private sectors.

Cypriot women's civil-society organizations have been increasingly active in efforts to achieve justice, reconciliation, peace and the reunification of Cyprus. Our recent historical experience has given Cypriot women an unfortunate but real example of the importance of the women and peace and security agenda. They have experienced the disproportionate effects of war. They have realized how crucial it is to make their voices heard, as well as the importance of being included in the peace process. Their own experience has made them active in international peace and humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Cyprus has consistently supported the activities of women's organizations in promoting peace and reconciliation. Among other things, in 2008, we helped establish a women's multicultural centre, with the aim of bringing together women from both communities in Cyprus and promoting gender equality, reconciliation and peace. Last April, we established a technical committee on gender equality in the context of the ongoing negotiations for a resolution to the Cyprus problem. That bi-communal committee will work towards making women's voices heard and promote gender equality at all stages of the peacemaking process. The work of the committee draws from the experience with, and the recommendations on, the women and peace and security agenda.

Fully conscious that sustainable peace cannot be achieved when we leave out half of the world's population, and of the fact that we, as well as the international community, have a long way to go in order to fully implement the women and peace and security agenda, we commit to continue, through our national action plan on gender equality for the period 2014-2017, to strive to eliminate deeply rooted stereotypes, among the main obstacles to gender equality, and to ensure women's active participation in peacemaking efforts, as well as to work to increase women's participation in public and political life, to redouble our efforts in support of women's increased participation in the peace process and to continue our consultation with civil-society organizations in order to ensure that women's voices are heard louder and with the attention that they deserve.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our commitment to the women and peace and security agenda and the efforts to update it following the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I also express our full support for resolution 2242 (2015), adopted this morning, of which Cyprus was a sponsor.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Honduras.

Ms. Flores (Honduras): My delegation expresses its appreciation to the presidency of the Security Council and to the Government of Spain for organizing this open debate devoted to women and peace and security. We also thank the Secretary-General for his work on the annual reports on landmark resolution 1325 (2000) as the normative framework on which, after 15 years, there is now a glimmer of progress and achievement — which nevertheless still falls short of many objectives to which we aspire.

Today, we must agree upon and make effective the recommendations made by United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes, as well as by national Governments and civil society organizations, to move forward steadily in outlining the course ahead. Honduras believes that women are the critical missing link in our global pact to attain sustainable development through a culture of peace. More than half of the world's population cannot be relegated to the sidelines or excluded from decisions and events that affect their lives and those of the next generations entrusted to them. Moral and human rights require that women exercise their freedom, liberty and choice and become equal participants and partners in issues related to conflict prevention, resolution and recovery. The only way to fully empower women is to ensure that women empower themselves through the full exercise of their economic and political rights, which are fundamental to dignity, security and well-being for all.

Women must take action to secure their livelihoods so that they can take care of their dependants, children and elders, who are the most vulnerable of humankind. In the twenty-first century, that is only possible by bridging the gaps in gender equality through access to education and technology. In that endeavour, UN-Women plays an essential role. Funding for this entity and for all agencies that have a direct impact on women must be significantly increased, with an emphasis on a renewed, effective and measurable commitment.

We have witnessed the birth of a transformational agenda. The key to global success in its implementation lies in the synergy and the architecture and framework of the Organization, with the full inclusion and participation of women across the board. In our responsibility as framers and drivers of this ambitious agenda, first and foremost, we must commit to the restructuring of this house, the United Nations, through an inclusive and holistic reform, with women at the forefront. We await a call from within the United Nations and from the leaders of all Member States, particularly the five permanent members of the Security Council, to lead by example, to remain true to the Charter of the United Nations, to elect a female Secretary-General and to work towards an agreement to relinquish the veto power in resolutions on matters in which women must be protected, supported and empowered.

Member States must be encouraged to create effective and achievable national action plans to implement resolution 1325 (2000). Women must be lead actors and participants in the drafting and implementation of those plans, in which the local reality in every household and community must be taken into account. If empowered locally, women will impact globally. Women must be active participants in critical areas, such as the rule of law, justice, governance, peace negotiations and agreements, and nation-building and must contribute to the transformation of the security sector.

Given the alarming escalation in the number of cases of femicide, sexual and gender-based violence and human trafficking, together with the emerging threats of extremism and gender terrorism, action is urgently needed to counter the devastating effects on all humankind. A special task force that includes women's vision and leadership is required in framing a targeted action plan that can achieve a cultural shift towards more balanced and harmonious societies.

Last and most important, it is only through an awareness and a recognition of the traditional role played by women and their impact on culture and heritage that we will bequeath a culture of peace to the next generation. Women have strong connections to traditions that can be traced back to ancient civilizations. Indigenous women, who are often hampered by sociocultural barriers, are wise and knowledgeable. They share the aches and pains of mother Earth.

In their inherited collective wisdom, women possess innate abilities as healers, mediators, intermediators and peacemakers. With that acknowledgment, let us rediscover in and through women the enormous contribution that women can make with respect to all global issues, for they are the true heroines of peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Panama.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to thank the delegation of Spain, Sir, for convening this open Council debate on the topic "Women and peace and security".

I would like to reiterate the message of the President of the Republic of Panama, His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, during the general debate:

> "In today's world, women are the ones who suffer most from the effects of inequality, poverty, war, forced displacement due to conflicts, trafficking in human beings and inequality in terms of opportunities. Consequently, the role that we, Heads of State, and the United Nations are called upon to play to defend and promote the rights and freedoms of women is of paramount importance." (*A/70/PV.19*)

We reiterate the appeal made at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, held on 6 March 2015, for more resources to be given to address femicide and all human trafficking, especially violence against women.

Panama aligns itself with the statement made earlier today by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Human Security Network. Panama is a sponsor of resolution 2242 (2015), adopted by the Security Council today, which reflects the complexity and scale of the issue. The numerous armed conflicts we see at the global level unfortunately have demonstrated that women have available to them few resolutionesources to protect themselves, yet, together with their sons and daughters, they represent the majority of the displaced and refugee population. Women have also claimed space and, in some cases, led peace movements that promoted the recovery of their communities following conflicts. Yet, women have remained invisible, which is a historical failure we must overcome. That exclusion has limited women's access to opportunities for recovery, their ability to obtain justice for violations of their human rights and their participation in legal and institutional reforms.

It is up to the States, therefore, to continue to work to promote the greater participation of women at all stages of peace and security processes. Similarly, resolution 1325 (2000), which brings us together today, on the occasion of its fifteenth anniversary, is the first resolution to establish a connection between the experiences of women in conflicts and the international agenda for peace and security and to highlight the fact that conflicts have a disproportionate impact on women. This resolution becomes even more relevant today, as we see the violence levelled against women by extremist groups that violate their rights, their dignity, their integrity and their very lives. Consequently, it is essential that the Security Council call upon all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

Fifteen years have passed, and women's contributions are still undervalued and underutilized. The claims and spaces created through women's participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts should be enhanced to guarantee them the primary role they have been called on to play. The post-2015 development agenda (General Assembly resolution 70/1), recently adopted by our Heads of State, follows that path. It is an important step towards achieving the goal of women's broad and equal participation, without discrimination. The world needs such a fundamental transformation. We cannot continue to do what we have been accustomed to doing; that is no longer an option. The issues of peace and security are a commitment that is intrinsically related to the promotion of human development, seen as people-centred sustainable development, in the context of governance, into which women's presence and actions must be interwoven. From the home to public life, the State must ensure the empowerment of women and men alike so as to build better citizens, better fathers, better mothers, promoting a platform of education that helps to raise children who are peaceful and non-aggressive.

Today, the Administration of our country depends on a significant number of women who work for the Panamanian Government, including the Vice-President and Foreign Minister of the Republic, other ministers, deputy ministers, agency director and heads of diplomatic missions. Similarly, the creation of a gender unit in the police force under the law on prevention of femicide is another example of the integration of women into the security agenda of Panama.

A couple of days ago on 11 October, we celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child, a generation that must empower so as to effectively break the circle of poverty, violence, inequality and exclusion. The girls of today will inherit the world of tomorrow, and we must deliver them a safe and peaceful environment. In the same vein, Panama favours the election of a woman as Secretary-General because we support and will continue to support all efforts of that organ to ensure that a woman occupies that position of world leadership and guidance.

In conclusion, if we are to achieve the development we desire, we need a more feminine vision of the world. Yes, such a vision will come mainly from women, but also from engaged and informed men. The participation of 100 per cent of our people in every last phase of the search for lasting peace and security will finally release the human potential to resolve the most pressing issues we face. Perhaps the most important reference in the resolution adopted today is its last line — the Security Council "decides to remain actively seized of the matter".

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): I thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Yanar Mohammed, Ms. Julienne Lusenge and Ms. Alaa Murabit for their statements. I also thank Spain, in its capacity as presidency of the Security Council, for organizing this important debate marking the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Latvia aligns itself with the statement delivered by observer of the European Union.

In 2000, resolution 1325 recognized that war impacts women differently and stressed the need to increase women's participation in peace talks. No other Security Council resolution is better known for its number and name because it was truly a historic milestone. Today, we can assess what has been achieved in the past 15 years thanks to a very comprehensive global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as to Secretary-General's latest report on women and peace and security (S/2015/716).

Significant developments have taken place over the past 15 years. The normative framework for women, peace and security has been strengthened by seven follow-up resolutions to resolution 1325, with the latest resolution 2242 (2015) adopted this morning, which Latvia proudly co-sponsored. The empowerment of women and girls and respect for their human rights, as well as women's full participation in decision-making processes, including in conflict prevention and resolution, have been recognized as crucial contributors to peacemaking and peacebuilding. There has been an important change in the way the international community views and deals with conflict-related sexual violence.

Despite these positive changes, the global implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been far from complete. The participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict processes needs to be more visible and effective. More efforts are necessary to tackle impunity for conflict-related sexual violence. Moreover, the current challenges to international peace and security, such as the changing nature of conflicts, the growing threat of non-state armed Actors, the use of new technologies for warfare, and dire humanitarian crises are too complex and often require comprehensive solutions. The rights of women and girls have been particularly violated by the spread of violent extremism.

These challenges affirm the need for the strengthening of conflict-prevention, early-warning and early-action mechanisms, especially by the Security Council. Latvia believes that the findings of the global study, together with the other two ongoing United Nations reviews of peace operations and the peacebuilding architecture, can contribute to the strengthened United Nations response to conflicts and the recognition of the special role of women in all areas of peace and security decision-making. We support the synergies among all three United Nations reviews.

Reducing the gaps in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda requires the commitment of all actors, especially United Nations Member States. Latvia has incorporated the principles of the resolution 1325 (2000) in the regulatory provisions of its national armed forces, as well as in its predeployment training programmes. Women's representation among Latvian military personnel, including among personnel deployed in international operations, has increased. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been an important element of Latvia's development cooperation, for example in Afghanistan and Iraq. Latvia will continue to develop a national policy framework in order to address emerging challenges to achieving gender equality, and to strengthen the legal framework in order to eliminate violence against women and girls.

While the guidelines and recommendations of the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) still need to be assessed, Latvia hopes they will help boost the women and peace and security agenda in the future.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Paraguay.

Mr. Scappini Ricciardi (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Sir, allow me to thank your delegation for having brought such an important issue for discussion before the Security Council.

The most important Security Council resolution on the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention is now 15 years old. The Republic of Paraguay joins the commemoration of the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). The resolution is important not only because it is the first to point out the inextricable link between gender equality and the participation of women in international peace and security, but also because it recognizes the particular impact of armed conflict on women and the role they play in peace processes and post-war rehabilitation.

The Republic of Paraguay, which has participated actively in peacekeeping operations since 1993, reaffirms its commitment to prevention, protection and the participation of women before, during and, where necessary, after conflicts. In this regard, the Government of Paraguay, taking into account its international commitments to contributing to peacebuilding and the need to integrate the gender perspective into conflict prevention, management and resolution, recently finalized its national action plan, which will allow it to implement the mandates set out in resolution 1325 (2000). The national action plan, which will be officially released later this month, is the fruit of the efforts and coordination carried out by various national institutions since 2012, including the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with the valuable support and continuing assistance of UN-Women, of which we are a faithful ally.

In 2015, our country has enjoyed the highest percentage of female participation in awareness programmes and training for peace operations. Some 27 per cent of participants are women, and we hope to see this percentage increase through the efforts of the relevant institutions to promote the greater participation of women in the contingents of peacekeeping missions in which Paraguay is a participant. The main obstacles that prevent women's full participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding can bee linked to gender-based discrimination and women's economic and social exclusion, situations that entail the denial of women's rights. That is why it is so important to work to strengthen women's human rights from a perspective that includes devoting attention to their economic, social and cultural rights.

Numerous experiences in conflict and post-conflict situations have proven that the exclusion of women from peace processes not only undermines the promotion and protection of their human rights but also reduces the probabilities of lasting peace and future development for all the citizens of a given country.

The inclusion of a gender perspective in every aspect of peacebuilding, including conflict prevention, management and resolution, requires, first and foremost, the political will to include women in decision-making processes. Without the participation of women there can be neither a gender agenda nor political decisions that reflect a gender perspective.

As we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we call on Member States to ensure that all resolutions and initiatives on women and peace and security are implemented with specific measures that ensure women's effective participation in peacebuilding activities under equitable conditions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like first to commend the Spanish Presidency of the Security Council for convening this open debate on women and peace and security on the occasion of the high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000). Despite the advances and good practices that have been developed with respect to that resolution, obstacles to its effective implementation remain. In that regard and with a view to preventing violence against women, Peru enacted a law to equalize gender opportunities between men and women and adopted a national gender-equity plan, as well as a national plan to combat violence against women.

Similarly, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations has developed a registry of internally displaced persons, which has made it possible to protect the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. Likewise, through a law enacted in 2005, my country established a comprehensive reparations plan for the victims of acts of violence that occurred between 1980 and 2000. The national plan to combat violence against women incorporated the topic of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, calling for its inclusion in regional policies throughout the country. The plan calls for the inclusion of all forms of sexual violence within the ambit of the comprehensive reparations plan, in particular that inflicted on women victimized during the period of terrorist violence.

At the international level, Peru supports the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy, which strongly condemns the participation of persons working under the flag of the United Nations in any form of inappropriate or immoral behaviour, especially in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse against civilians, in particular women and girls.

Moreover, my country welcomes the trend towards the systematic incorporation of a gender perspective in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as well as the integration of women as actors in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. For that reason, Peru has increased the participation of women in each of the eight missions in which we participate. Women currently represent 10 per cent of our staff deployed on the ground, a figure that we hope to increase in the future.

Peru looks favourably on the inclusion in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) of a Goal designed to achieve gender parity and the empowerment of women and girls. In that regard, we believe that the challenge that we most urgently need to address is the implementation of measures to achieve full respect for women and girls in line with resolution 1325 (2000), through which the international community recognized the pressing need to offer specialized training on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in situations of conflict around the world.

In that regard and in the light of the current high-level review to assess progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the national, regional and international levels, Peru commits to work with other

States to address the remaining problems in that area, with the goal of achieving a peaceful environment in which all women, without exception, are able to lead full lives free of any form of abuse, in particular in contexts of violence and conflict, where they are most vulnerable. Similarly, by way of reaffirming my country's commitment to supporting this important topic and agenda, Peru sponsored the resolution adopted this morning (resolution 2242 (2015)), which paves the way for the path to be followed in the coming years with regard to the agenda of women and peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your country's assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council this month and to thank you, Sir, for convening this debate of highest importance on women and pace and security. I also thank you for affording us the opportunity to meet today, not only to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) but also to take stock of the progress made to date, as well as to define the gaps and challenges that remain to be addressed and to renew our commitments.

The historic adoption 15 years ago of resolution 1325 (2000) recognized the role that women play in matters of peace and security, not only as victims but also as agents of change and indispensable actors in the re-establishment, maintenance and consolidation of peace. That resolution enabled us to make significant progress towards women's autonomy, particularly in conflict situations, by developing national action plans with quantifiable indicators and through the implementation of follow-up mechanisms. Since the adoption of that resolution, a number of new commitments were undertaken, aimed at according greater political recognition and stronger emphasis to the question of women and peace and security in political discourse. Six other Security Council resolutions have contributed to developing that political framework and to promoting positive norms. The adoption of all those resolutions sends a strong message with respect to the firm and continuing commitment of the international community to advancing women's independence and to protecting their rights.

Despite some signs of progress, the impact on women's lives and on their role in the world has been sporadic. Conflicts have devastating consequences for everyone, but women and girls are often the target of gender-based violence and are those most excluded from the political processes that are essential to guaranteeing peace and security. Because women are the most vulnerable and the most frequently targeted members of populations in situations of conflict, they have an undeniable and unique contribution to make to peace negotiations. Members of the Council will note that the experience of both Haiti and West Africa has proven that, when women are involved in peace processes, they have been able to bring their sensitivity and creativity not only to the peace process itself but also to national reconciliation efforts and the process of socioeconomic reintegration.

Conflict prevention is an essential element of the women and peace and security programme. Women's perspectives on the tensions in social relationships, their awareness of threats to personal, social and community safety, their knowledge of the flow of small arms and light weapons in the heart of communities, and their interpretation of extremism in local discourse help shape the primary mechanism for rapid response and early warning when conflict is imminent; yet they are rarely heeded or taken into account by the local authorities tasked with security.

Conflict prevention is a central pillar of the programme for women and peace and security. Since 2000, however, prevention has unfortunately failed to receive the same degree of sustained attention as post-conflict problems such as the reconstruction of State security services.

Resolution 2122 (2013) recognizes that lack of attention and aims to promote the role of women at all levels in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery. The resolution has filled a gap in interpretation, which was formerly focused only on the prevention of gender-based violence during conflicts rather than on preventing conflicts themselves. It is therefore necessary to follow a more comprehensive and holistic approach that tackles the root causes of conflicts, and not just their impact on women, girls, men and boys.

The establishment of genuine peace in society requires healthy and inclusive political, economic and social structures. Local women's organizations are drivers in promoting women's empowerment and their effective participation in political, economic and social life. My delegation endorses the recommendations set out in the Secretary-General's later report (S/2015/716), in particular those that encourage equal and timely access to basic services, putting an end to discriminatory laws and practices, strengthening the rule of law, ensuring equitable economic development and maintaining a space for civil society.

Women and girl refugees and internally displaced persons continue to be victims of violations of all sorts. Regional dialogues with refugee women, which are regularly organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, show that undocumented women and girls continue to suffer from the worst acts of gender-based discrimination, in particular in terms of access to health-care services, education and other social services. Women and girl refugees and internally displaced persons who are fleeing violence and fighting find themselves once again at risk of sexual exploitation, rape, prostitution and forced marriage, pregnancy and sterilization. Even worse, they are now auctioned and sold in slave markets.

Member States must comply with their international obligations and register the refugees who are present on their territory. That will ensure the empowerment of vulnerable women and their active participation in national and regional institutions for conflict prevention. In addition, it is important to allow broad participation by all internally displaced and refugee women in decision-making processes in order to not leave them simply in the hands of political organizations or criminal groups.

By way of conclusion, allow highlight the following observations.

Strong political will and the full commitment of Member States to the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) will enable the active participation of women in national, regional and international institutions for the prevention, protection and management of conflict situations.

The participation of women in peace efforts is a matter of gender equality and respect for universal human rights. It is crucial to achieving lasting peace, economic recovery, social cohesion and political credibility. Women should be encouraged to become further involved in issues of peace. Their contribution is necessary to establish lasting peace. They must be involved at every stage of the efforts undertaken to restore the rule of law and rebuild societies through transitional justice. Their voice must be heard and their rights protected. We must eliminate stereotypes in order to guarantee the effective participation of women at all stages of the peace and decision-making processes.

Enhancing the empowerment of women allows them to meet their basic needs and reduce their working hours, and thus to have more time and space to become involved in the process of managing local conflicts. That will also contribute to strengthening social stability.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

Mr. Mawe (Ireland): A complete version of my statement this evening has been submitted in writing.

Ireland also aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union.

It has been 15 years since our predecessors in the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000). Since then, the nature and locations of conflict have changed. What has not changed, unfortunately, is that women and their voices continue to be underrepresented in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. Women's rights continue to be violated. If we want to save future generations from the scourge of war, that has to stop.

Ireland welcomes the evidence base for action outlined in the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It is a substantial body of work, which must be afforded substantial consideration. We must consider the specific and transformative steps that must be taken by all of us to implement this agenda.

One of the key messages of the study is that women's participation is the central to sustainable peace. We know that to be true from our own experience of sustaining peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland. We will continue to share our own experience and to learn from the experiences of others.

Grave crimes against women and gross violations of women's human rights continue to horrify us. Ireland has supported the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women since 2006 and continues to do so. Furthermore, Ireland intends to partner with the Justice Rapid Response and UN-Women sexual and gender-based violence justice experts roster to support investigations, prosecutions and victim recovery in situations of conflict-related gender-based crimes.

We are also shocked and outraged by incidents of sexual abuse involving United Nations and other peacekeepers. Perpetrators must be brought to justice, and the dignity and rights of survivors protected.

The empowerment of women must be at the centre of all of our engagements in this year's reviews and reflection. We welcome not just the review of resolution 1325 (2000), but also the related reviews of peace operations and peacebuilding architecture. We look forward to the World Humanitarian Summit next year as an opportunity to align today's agenda with that important process.

Again, looking beyond the immediate, the implementation of the specific Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality and on peaceful and inclusive societies, which we have all committed to under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), will be crucial. The challenge in 2015 is not a lack of a normative framework, but a lacuna in implementation. Today's resolution 2242 (2015), which Ireland co-sponsored, is another positive step. To assist in taking action, I can announce today that Ireland will support the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action with a minimum of €200,000. Tools like that must be supported so we miss no opportunities to really effect change.

Despite many challenges, there is much to be hopeful about in the women and peace and security agenda. It is up to all of us now to act on what we have heard and said today.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica congratulates Spain on having organized this debate and welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), which we co-sponsored. The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was a landmark in the history of the Organization. It marks a normative shift in the way we talk about women in the context of international peace and security. Resolution 1325 (2000) called upon Member States to prioritize women in peace and security processes and to stop talking about women as victims and, instead, to begin simultaneous conversations about the importance of promoting women's agency and participation. Resolution 1325 (2000) established a bold agenda in which gender equality forms the basis of peaceful and inclusive societies.

Despite the increased visibility of women in these processes, much work remains to be done in terms of impact. While a greater number of women participate in peace negotiations, nearly half of all peace agreements make no mention of women, and those that do, are often insubstantial. There may be an increase in the number of women's groups in the field, but women still remain especially vulnerable in conflict situations.

To remedy this disparity, the inclusion of women in peace and security processes must go beyond checking a box marked "women". Costa Rica believes that the full and effective participation of women means much more than inserting women in the existing security structures and concepts. The original intention of resolution 1325 (2000) was never to promote women soldiers, but rather to reap the rewards obtained when women are granted space to participate as equals in the search for solutions.

Costa Rica recognizes that the path towards complete implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is not an easy one. Just as there is not only one type of woman in the world, there is also no single best practice for operationalizing gender equality and women's security amid the myriad of distinct conditions on the ground. It is for this reason that we must work towards creating a women-inclusive system of operations on the basis of the normative agenda established by resolution 1325 (2000). An analysis of the disconnect between how the Security Council talks about women and how the wider United Nations community implements the women and peace and security agenda should be at the forefront of our debates as we move forward from this fifteenth anniversary of the resolution.

Costa Rica stands firmly in support of holistic approaches that enable women to participate in addressing the root causes of conflict, but it is impossible to move forward without also ensuring justice for those who have been victims of the systemic violence that accompanies conflict and war. In 1998, during her tenure on the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Costa Rican judge Elizabeth Odio Benito worked successfully to have rape and other forms of sexual assault be considered forms of torture. Odio Benito's interpretation, based on the case of two Serbian women who were raped in the Celebici detention camp, is now an accepted principle of international law.

Costa Rica is outraged by the pervasiveness of sexual violence as a weapon of war and condemns the sexual misconduct and abuse committed by United Nations peacekeepers. Odio Benito's juridical legacy continues to form part of our efforts to have sexual violence as a weapon of war considered a crime against humanity, and this belief is reflected in our zero-tolerance position against impunity in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel.

On this fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we do not wish the United Nations to be accused of being another institution with "binders full of women".

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Gambia.

Mr. Tangara (Gambia): I will read out this statement on behalf of the President of the Republic of the Gambia.

> "Allow me first of all to seize this opportunity to commend and congratulate the Prime Minister of Spain for having convened such an important debate on women and peace and security. It is with great please that I join other participants here in this very important forum at this high-level debate on women, peace and security, which also seeks to review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), following the Security Council's due recognition of not only the particular effects of conflict on women but the need to also include them as active stakeholders in conflict prevention and resolution.
>
> "Fifteen years ago, the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the legal and political framework within which national Governments, regional organizations, the United Nations system and non-State actors are obliged to address the situation of women in crisis and war. It is worth noting that the resolution was adopted on 31 October 2000 following decades of lobbying by women's rights activists, and that it was the first resolution that specifically addressed the impact of war on women and girls, thus underscoring the premise that women's inclusion, their presence and participation in the process, their perspectives and their contribution to substantive talks will certainly improve their chances of achieving a viable and sustainable peace.
>
> "Bearing in mind the fact that resolution 1325 (2000) emerged a decade after the end of the Cold War, when new kinds of violence and warfare were already evident, in particular it was also a recognition of the complexity of post-conflict peacebuilding in countries such as Bosnia, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, when social fabric and trust within communities had been destroyed. However, although resolution 1325 (2000) and the six subsequent resolutions that followed have given much-needed international attention to the impact of conflict on women and girls, women still face a fight for recognition in both war and peace. A study conducted to mark the tenth anniversary of the resolution found that United Missions had achieved little success in improving the participation of women in peace negotiations and agreements. Women in rural areas still felt excluded. The report went on to state that while some progress had been made in passing laws against sexual and gender-based violence and improving women's security, conflict-related sexual violence as a deliberate strategy in areas of conflict still occurred with impunity and had proved a formidable challenge for peacekeeping missions.
>
> "Fortunately, more and more women are taking an appropriate stance, and more men are supporting them in this venture. Resolution 1325 (2000) provides a vehicle for bringing together economic, political and security interests to address the link between gender and conflict, and I am proud that we in the Gambia have not abandoned, and will strive to ensure, our constant presence in the global arena.
>
> "The Gambia promotes the participation of women in peace processes by means of its policy with regard to recruitment and secondment as well as in its support for qualified candidates. This is to ensure that experts seconded to civilian peacebuilding operations as well as participants in military peacekeeping operations receive a high level of training in the specific area of gender in preparation for their deployment on mission.

"The protection of women is a priority of the Gambia's peacebuilding efforts, since it is women who tend to suffer the most from violence during and after armed conflicts. Protection of the rights of women and the girl child is also one of the main aspects of the Gambia's human rights policy. In the international context, the Gambia makes women's rights and the violation thereof the subject of discussions. The Gambia also points to violations of women's rights in the context of armed conflict and multilateral negotiations as well as in bilateral demarches and interventions.

"The Gambia is also committed, at the international level, to combating trafficking in women and girls and to protecting the victims of trafficking. Other priorities include efforts to improve the protection of internally displaced persons, many of whom are women, and to oppose immunity for those who perpetrate crimes against women in the context of armed conflict.

"Furthermore, the Gambia supports projects and actors that address the specific problem of violence against women, rape, trafficking and the exploitation of women in the context of armed conflicts, either through prevention and protection of the victim or by efforts to end impunity. We have a policy of zero tolerance with regard to the sexual exploitation of women in all cases involving civilian and military personnel seconded to peacebuilding operations. Training modules specifically address the problems of trafficking in human beings and women's vulnerability to sexual abuse in conflicts, including by those involved in peace missions.

"Resolution 1325 (2000) specifically calls for gender perspectives to be taken into consideration in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, as well as for the participation of women in all mechanisms for the implementation of such agreements.

"Particular attention is paid to the gender aspect of transitional justice, which is one of the priorities of the Gambia's policy in the area of human rights and humanitarian activities. Central to these efforts are the women's amendment of 2012, the national agenda on women's empowerment policy 2010-2020, the children's act, the trafficking act, the refugee act and, most recently, the domestic violence and sexual offence acts of 2013. All these procedures are indeed very innovative in that they consistently take women's rights into consideration. This can be seen, for example, in the definition of so-called gender crimes, the rights of women in court procedures, in the representation of the two sexes in the court's various bodies and in the organization of the court with regard to the protection of victims and witnesses. Additional forms are to be provided for projects that support the inclusion of women in political and legal transitional processes, with a view to ending impunity in cases involving crimes against women. This is intended to facilitate implementation of the corresponding procedures and evidentiary rules contained in the statutes.

"The Gambia has demonstrated effective involvement in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), especially through the development of its national action plan, the sine qua non for the effective implementation of the resolution by all Member States. However, to date, the record shows that only 21 out of 192 States Members of the United Nations have done so. We all have our individual roles in ensuring the resolution's implementation so that women's contribution to peacebuilding and decision-making are recognized and women's rights are ably protected. I am happy to report that these measures have led to a considerable number of reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence at the Edward Francis Small teaching hospital thanks to a complaints unit at the Women's Bureau, a unit jointly set up by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Child Protection Authority, the Ministry of Interior, inter alia, strengthened by a multisectoral national steering committee under the auspices of the office of the Vice-President and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with a mandate of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating implementation.

"Indeed we cannot but agree with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon when he said that participation alone is not sufficient. Women must not just sit at the peace table. They must be heard. Not only should women serve in police forces and peacekeeping missions, but they should also influence decision-making.

"At this fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), I wish to emphasize the importance of reflecting on what has been

> achieved, the lessons learned and how to become more effective in securing concrete changes not only for the prevention of violence but also the protection of human rights and for making progress on all issues related to gender equality.
>
> "In conclusion, I wish to put on record my fervent hope that this meeting will inspire better and more innovative initiatives on resolution 1325 (2000), gender-conscious responses to peace and security and effective contributions to conflict prevention and the protection and effective participation of women."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor the representative of Finland.

Mr. Sauer (Finland): I wish to align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union.

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting to mark the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. I also welcome the newly adopted resolution 2242 (2015), which Finland is proud to co-sponsor. We congratulate UN-Women for its leadership, and Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy and the high-level advisory group for the comprehensive global study to be officially launched tomorrow.

I would like to highlight some of our priorities and how we will strengthen our commitment. Finland has been a dedicated supporter of the women and peace and security agenda. This is reflected in the new Government programme setting out the implementation of 1325 (2000) as a priority. Finland is currently implementing its second national action plan. Next year we start the preparations for the third national action plan, taking into account the recommendations of the global study and the high-level review.

We welcome the fact that the United Nations reviews — the global study and the reviews of peace operations and the peacebuilding architecture — bring conflict prevention and mediation to the fore and stress the importance of the participation and leadership of women. Finland continues to promote conflict prevention and the role of mediation, and strives to effectively and meaningfully involve women in peace and mediation processes. Finland is committed to a joint Nordic initiative called Nordic Women Mediator's Network, to be established this year.

It is undisputed that increasing the number of women in peacekeeping operations enhances the effectiveness and operational capacity of these operations. Strengthening the gender architecture of peace operations, both in the field and at headquarters, is crucial. Finland will continue deploying women to peacekeeping operations as military experts in numbers at least equivalent to the proportion of women in our national defence forces. We also aim to increase the number of Finnish female police officers seconded to United Nations peacekeeping operations. As a new commitment, we stand ready to deploy a specialized unit of 3-4 female police officers to the United Nations by the end of 2016.

Gender training of peacekeeping staff, including senior management, is crucial for the effective mainstreaming of the gender perspective. Our training institutes for military and civilian peace operations personnel have adopted resolution 1325 (2000) as part of their training curriculum. Finland commits to continuing to provide gender training for all Finnish personnel deployed to peace operations.

I would like to stress the importance of abiding by the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by mission personnel. We must take more robust measures in tackling these cases in order to make the zero-tolerance policy into a zero-case reality. We have committed ourselves to investigating and punishing all cases.

The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is facing new challenges, such as violent extremism, which has a dramatic impact on women and girls. A coordinated and integrated approach, with the leadership and empowerment of women, are needed for countering extremism.

Sexual violence and abductions of women and girls are used as a weapon of war and a tactic of terror. The critical need to address sexual violence in conflict and to step up efforts to eliminate impunity has been forcefully recognized across the world. Finland has been a staunch financial supporter in this area and will continue to be one. We have provided multi-year financial support to the International Criminal Court Trust Fund for Victims. Finland has also contributed financially to the Justice Rapid Response initiative, the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the Coalition for the International Criminal Court.

Today's meeting is important for keeping up the momentum, strengthening our commitment and pressing for more results. The support for UN-Women needs to be increased in order for it to fulfil its leadership role in the promotion and implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. As one of UN-Women's top donors, Finland remains committed to supporting this goal.

We need to allocate more funds to the women and peace and security agenda. Accordingly, I would like to note that 52 per cent of funding by Finland to fragile States is directed to activities with a gender focus.

Finland is continuing partnership cooperation on national action plan processes. As an example of this cooperation, Finland has supported Afghanistan in the preparation of its recently launched national action plan, and we stand ready to support the implementation process as well.

The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is our collective responsibility. Only effective implementation at the international, regional and national levels will lead to sustainable peace and the empowerment of women.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor the representative of Monaco.

Ms. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): Celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in the current context means recognizing the indispensable role women play in development and peace. The resolution's unanimous adoption, and the six resolutions that subsequently strengthened it, sent a strong and clear message to the international community: the threats and violations of human rights against women in conflict and post-conflict situations are unacceptable. They are daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. They are women who have been brutalized, raped, exploited, enslaved or forced into prostitution.

The global study and its indicators have highlighted women's vulnerability, which has worsened as conflicts, violent extremism and terrorism have proliferated. The recommendations of the high-level advisory group and the outstanding and untiring efforts of UN-Women are more relevant than ever at a time when we are reviewing peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations as well as celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform of Action.

We must build on the considerable progress that has already been made on the women and peace and security agenda. With their assistance and experience, the United Nations agencies and the organizations in the field, particularly the International Committee of the Red Cross, have made a substantial contribution by implementing our commitments and sharing their expertise. The determination of all these actors, to whom Monaco pays tribute, has helped to mobilize the international community as a whole. That collective effort is crucial if we are to achieve gender equality, empower women and girls and promote effective institutions, peaceful societies and access to justice, all Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To that end, we recognize that educating girls and women and supporting civil society are priorities.

It is therefore essential that we support the participation of women and gender experts in conflict prevention and not merely in peace negotiations and peacebuilding. Similarly, the judicial proceedings of our international tribunals should help to strengthen the fight against impunity and ensure zero tolerance for those who perpetrate sexual and gender-based violence. Justice for victims should help to rebuild not only the victims themselves but also their families and communities and can also contribute to ending stigmatization of victims.

Finally, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Spanish presidency of the Council. Monaco is a sponsor of resolution 2242 (2015), which we adopted today and which breathes new energy into the political commitment of Member States and the United Nations to the agenda on women and peace and security. We will continue to support UN-Women.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Anshor (Indonesia): I would first like to thank Spain for convening this important open debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2015/716) and to express my gratitude to all the briefers for their constructive insights into the progress made over the past 15 years and the challenges that remain in implementing the agenda on women and peace and security.

I would like to associate my remarks with the statement to be delivered tomorrow by the representative of Viet Nam on behalf of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

It is a long-established fact that gender issues cut across many sectors and that focusing on them can help us to attain our peace, development and human rights objectives. Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), 15 years ago, many thematic discussions and resolutions on gender have evolved from it, such as those on small arms, counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and the protection of civilians. It is particularly noteworthy that peacekeeping missions have integrated gender perspectives into their training, operations and reporting. Nevertheless, the fact remains that women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations are still unduly affected and underrepresented, even with the addition of all the resolutions on women and peace and security adopted subsequently and aimed at strengthening action on resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the creation of relevant mechanisms within the United Nations. Ultimately, the best measure of progress is when policy gains are more meaningfully and tangibly translated into action on the ground.

Moving forward, and building on the momentum created by the high-level review of the past 15 years, I would like to suggest that the Council focus on five areas. First, it should ensure that women have the access and the capacity they need to participate meaningfully in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacebuilding and decision-making processes in public life generally. Secondly, it should support advocacy campaigns aimed at reaching out and empowering society to protect women and girls and address their specific needs. All actors and stakeholders, especially at the community level, should be able to translate international frameworks on protecting women and girls in conflict- and post-conflict-related situations into action on the ground.

Thirdly, it should empower women and girls to be agents for change and peace rather than merely focusing on their vulnerability as victims. Fourthly, it should put monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place in the United Nations system designed to provide an integrated perspective on implementing resolution 1325 (2000), with the aim of supporting implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. Fifthly, it should continue to encourage synergy with various relevant initiatives, including any developed outside the United Nations framework, and to galvanize support from diverse actors, including those working in the field, in order to promote gender equality and strengthen the protection of women and girls in armed conflict.

As a major peacekeeping contributor, Indonesia remains a strong supporter of the Security Council resolutions that protect and empower women and girls in situations of armed conflict. Indonesian military and police units are currently deployed in nine United Nations operations, totalling more than 1,600 personnel. The Government of Indonesia eventually aims to contribute 4,000 Indonesian peacekeepers, including females, and has established a peacekeeping training centre to serve as a national and regional hub for integrated peacekeeping training and a centre of excellence. Gender perspectives have already been embedded in their training curriculums and syllabuses.

Indonesia will continue to support the Council's deliberations on this agenda item and remains resolved to work with the Council, the United Nations, Member States and all actors in order to empower women and girls as agents for change and peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza: My delegation would like to congratulate Spain on its presidency of the Security Council this month and its convening of this particularly important open debate and high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000). The resolution was historic in its aim to highlight for the first time the links between women, armed conflict and peace and security. It also recognized that women and children are affected by armed conflict in differentiated and more adverse ways, and that women play a crucial role in maintaining and promoting peace and security.

In the light of the number, intensity and changing nature of current conflicts, the high-level review and global study we are discussing are very relevant. Violent extremism and terrorism in many parts of the world, particularly the Middle East and parts of Africa, have brought violence to new levels of savagery against civilians and cultural and religious patrimonies. Women and girls are caught up in such conflict situations and subjected to rape, sexual assault, torture, human trafficking, forced marriages and forced religious conversions. They are bought and sold and even given as gifts or trophies to terrorist fighters.

My delegation is particularly appalled by acts of sexual violence used as a strategy of war and designed to dehumanize and demoralize women, girls and their families. Such attacks have long-term, even lifelong, traumatic effects on women and girls, both physically and psychologically, and in many cases the victims of sexual violence are excluded from or heavily stigmatized in their families and communities. Such crimes also have a detrimental effect on younger generations, since women are most often the primary educators, caregivers and breadwinners. Such realities are harrowing. As Pope Francis said in his address to the General Assembly on 25 September, they "should serve as an urgent call to those charged with the conduct of international affairs to examine their consciences" (see A/70/PV.3, page 5).

Catholic organizations and agencies rapidly and effectively respond to needs arising from violence directed at women and girls in many areas of conflict. They promote programmes aimed at preventing such violence and ensuring women's dignity and effective role in society by promoting pacification and reconciliation, while at the same time addressing the deeper causes of violence against women and girls. They run special programmes designed to fight the stigmatization of victims of sexual violence and to reintegrate them into their families and local communities.

Concerning the efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000), my delegation strongly objects to the suggestion that recovery and rehabilitation measures include abortion.

There is no doubt that much still has to be done. My delegation encourages the United Nations and its Member States to recruit more women for preventive diplomacy, mediation efforts, peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding processes. Women make specific, and at times decisive, contributions that are necessary in such critical areas as helping to foster good relations with local communities and building trust among parties in conflict — elements that are essential to the success of any diplomatic effort and conflict resolution.

The role of women in peace and security should not be considered as an afterthought or simply as something politically correct. It is an essential contribution to all our efforts to spare our world from further scourges of war and violence.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security to address the challenges facing the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. I would also like to note the lateness of the hour this evening, which serves to highlight the importance of this issue to the many Member States here today. We also appreciate you and your team's leadership, Sir, on this issue. And we applaud Spain for choosing to highlight this priority issue at a high level, and thank the United Kingom, as penholder, for its important work as well. We also note the extensive efforts by the League of Arab States to combat violence against women in our region, and in particular the Arab League strategy, whose full implementation we are all working towards.

As a proud sponsor of resolution 2242 (2015), adopted unanimously this morning, the United Arab Emirates commends the important focus on the role of women in countering violent extremism and terrorism, as many delegations highlighted here today. We join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his bold call to action and for calling attention to the need to combat the growing spread of violent extremism. We would also like to thank the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, for her briefing on the conclusions of the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2015/716). We extend our continued support to UN-Women in its role as secretariat of the global study. We welcome the launch of the study and we urge the international community to implement its key findings, rather than simply take note of them.

The high-level review on women and peace and security is timely given today's security challenges, which have been exacerbated by the growing impact of non-State actors and violent extremism, as well as the global refugee crisis. The rise of Daesh and its systematic use of sexual assault and rape is intended to destabilize and terrorize communities. Radical doctrines such as those propagated by Daesh are an insult to Islam, and in opposition to its universal tenets.

It is the core belief of the United Arab Emirates that it is critical to tackle the root causes of extremism before it becomes violent extremism. That requires collective international intervention to confront extremist ideology and propaganda, but at the national level it also requires supportive policies directed towards girls' education and women's empowerment, religious tolerance and a Constitution that guarantees equal treatment and opportunity. In the United Arab Emirates, ensuring there are real opportunities for women's leadership throughout society has also been an important policy priority, and is demonstrated by women such as Major Mariam Al-Mansouri, the country's first active-duty female fighter pilot. She is here this evening in another room in the United Nations, where she will receive the Asia Society 2015 Game Changers Award for her achievements. We are so proud of her. There is no better counter to Daesh's destructive narrative than the example she provides of the role and impact of women and peace and security in a moderate, tolerant Muslim society.

Now more than ever, it is crucial that we recognize the important and necessary contributions that women make in international peace and security efforts. We must place a sharper focus on prevention, the often-overlooked pillar of the women and peace and security agenda. As Alaa Murabit noted this morning, the engagement of women cannot continue to be a question of convenience. To truly achieve peace and security, we must prevent conflict and prevent violent extremism by addressing the root causes and investing in prevention early on. That shifting of gears needs to happen across the entire United Nations house, as well as in the approach of Member States to conflict prevention.

We know that empowering women and including their perspectives as part of inclusive peacebuilding is essential to creating functional, just and stable societies. That is why in the United Arab Emirates 13 years ago, under the auspices of our First Lady, Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, our country adopted its national strategy for the advancement of women, which prioritizes the participation of women in the national development process in both the public and private sectors and strengthens the concept of gender equality in policies, programmes and legislation. That is a live process, and we continue to work with our partners to do better as part of a commitment made at the highest levels of our Government.

In the international realm, the United Arab Emirates seeks not only to empower women but to empower society through women, in every setting and everywhere. That is even more critical when women are caught up in humanitarian or vulnerable settings. The United Arab Emirates has continued to strengthen that platform. Most recently, in February, we hosted a meeting of development and humanitarian experts in maternal and child health in Abu Dhabi to engage the Secretary-General's Every Woman, Every Child global movement. That unprecedented gathering developed the Abu Dhabi Declaration, which generated momentum for the renewed Every Woman, Every Child global strategy, launched at the General Assembly, to add focus on the "everywhere" component, that is, to broaden and strengthen this global movement and leave no one behind.

The Abu Dhabi Declaration helped ensure not only that gender is a key consideration in responses to humanitarian emergencies, but also that humanitarian settings are a key consideration in strategies for the advancement of gender equality. As we know, crises deepen existing gender inequalities, marginalization and exclusion. Yet women and young people are often both the first responders to crises and the leading innovators of sustainable solutions in crises. That is why the United Arab Emirates is dedicated to this initiative, for which we will continue to provide our steadfast support. As such, the United Arab Emirates will host a conference in Abu Dhabi in February with the United Nations High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing. Our hope is that the meeting will inform and enhance international action and innovation for the implementation and financing of the Every Woman, Every Child everywhere, in particular in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit and World Health Assembly next year.

As many Ministers noted today, there is now overwhelming evidence and consensus that the well-being of women in conflict and post-conflict settings, respect for women's rights and their asctive participation in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are directly related to the maintenance of international peace and security and sustainable development. The United Arab Emirates is committed to advancing sustainable peace by promoting and respecting women and girls' human rights and meaningfully integrating women within all efforts to prevent, resolve and rebuild from conflict. In that regard, I would like to share three priority issues that still must be addressed in order to achieve the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which we have all committed to.

First, there is a need to prioritize women's meaningful participation in all peace and security processes, as well as efforts to combat, reduce and prevent terrorism and violent extremism. That requires increasing the recruitment, retention and professionalization of women across all justice and security-sector components, including in peacekeeping operations.

Secondly, there is a need to recognize that holistic approaches to conflict prevention should aim to address the root causes and drivers of conflict and cycles of violence, including violent extremism, and not just their impacts on women, men, girls and boys after the damage is done. That requires engaging women in key political and decision-making processes, including in the development of any strategies or approaches aimed at preventing conflict. And it requires supporting the development of gender-sensitive security and justice sectors that are accessible to women and girls, uphold the rule of law and implement non-discriminatory laws, policies and practices.

Thirdly, there is a need to advocate for United Nations system leadership to deliver on the women and peace and security agenda over the next decade. That requires systematically integrating women and peace and security as a cross-cutting issue and recruiting gender and women and peace and security expertise, specifically in leadership capacities, both at United Nations Headquarters and in the field, including with regard to Special Envoys and Representatives and senior mediators.

Lastly, we must harness the political will demonstrated today under your leadership, Mr. President, and translate it into effective action by Member States to ensure that we, collectively, move the women and peace and security agenda forward. We should do this by tying our funding to the agenda. Today, I am pleased to announce that the United Arab Emirates will allocate $500,000 to UN-Women, to be utilized in countering extremism within the context of the women and peace and security agenda.

The United Arab Emirates stands in support of all United Nations efforts on this critical agenda and will continue working through our national, regional and international platforms to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are a number of speakers remaining on the list. With the consent of the Council, I therefore intend to suspend the meeting until tomorrow at 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 7.40 p.m.